

BIOGRAPHY OF SERVANT OF GOD JOSYF
VELAMIN-RUTSKI



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Metropolitan

JOSYF VELYAMYN RUTSKY—

THE GREAT REFORMER AND DEFENDER
OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

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In the decisive moments of the history of the Ukrainian-Catholic Church, there have always appeared towering individualities—leaders who, by the flight of their genius and the ardor of their action, pointed out paths toward the future... paths clear and firm as granite... certain. They supported the Church by the faith that burned within them. They inflamed the hearts of millions toward deeds that far surpassed even the most optimistic hopes.

To Divine Providence we owe their appearance on the great stage of events. St. Volodymyr, Metropolitan Hilarion, Hypatius Potij, St. Josaphat the Martyr, Metropolitan Rutsky—these are figures whose work will shine with glory in the annals of history and in the souls of the faithful of the Ukrainian-Catholic Church for as long as she exists and acts as a subject of historical life.

And to the supreme Ruler, the Most High, the Ukrainian-Catholic Church owes that Giant, whose holy death—on its 300th anniversary—she honors with bowed head in this year. The Most High always sends people their leaders at the right time, and indeed those whom they have deserved. And leadership is decisive in critical moments of history.

Without doubt, the pivotal moment in the history of the Ukrainian-Catholic Church was the Union of Brest, accomplished through the joint initiative of the Ukrainian episcopate at the synod in Brest in 1596. The fate of our Church and our nation became inseparably bound to the eternal ship of St. Peter, to Rome—governed by the successors of the very Founder of the Catholic Church, the Roman Pontiffs. The daughter was reunited with her Mother, from whom she had been violently torn away by the intrigues of Byzantium, by the unhappy division of Photius and Cerularius. Ukraine reunited with the West—with Europe... with that noble Europe of high Catholic culture, which grew beneath the wings of the Church... with that Europe incomprehensible to the nomads of the East, whom Byzantium always pulled away from her. (Attempts at Union at the Councils: Lyons, Florence, Constance.)

Stormy events were brewing. Would the entire Ukrainian populace—poisoned by schism—agree to this act at Brest? Would not the intrigues of Byzantium provoke bloodshed in the face of new developments? And on the other hand, would those who had crossed the Rubicon of schism stand firm?

In those decisive days, Providence gave us glorious leaders—giants: Hypatius Potij, St. Josaphat, and Velyamyn Rutsky, whose deeds stamped an indelible

mark on the course of events, with which we journey through the centuries. “It is well known,” writes Bishop Bocian, “that Potij secured the lawful existence of the Union in Poland; Rutsky gave it an organic structure; and St. Josaphat breathed his very soul into it.” They were the leaders sent by God to guide the destiny of the Ukrainian Church into a new life-giving channel and to give her the character she possesses even today.

Unconditional patriots, they sought the good of both the Church and the nation. This lay sincerely upon the hearts of Potij, Rutsky, and St. Josaphat. “They exchanged obedience to Constantinople for obedience to Rome, but they wished to preserve their united Church forever as a Ukrainian Church.” And although later blows of history shook the position of the Ukrainian Union, although hostile foreign forces destroyed the Union in certain regions, the cherished memory of those luminous days will shine with undying radiance in the souls of future generations... awakening an unquenchable longing to bring the word of the Gospel once more to the East, to kiss with trembling reverence the holy places soaked with the blood of St. Josaphat and the martyrs of Podlasie... and thus to repay the debt to the noble endeavors of great Ukrainians.

On 5 February 1637, one of that triad of Giants of the Ukrainian-Catholic Church—the Atlas of her Union, Metropolitan Yosyf Velyamyn Rutsky—closed his suffering eyes in eternal sleep. He died as a leader on the front lines of the struggle... one of those who gave the Ukrainian-Catholic Church that direction, that organizational structure, that inner spirit with which she flourishes today and prepares all the more earnestly to fulfill her historical mission—her vocation in Eastern Europe.

The Catholic historian Lypynsky characterizes this figure with the following words:

“Metropolitan Rutsky, an extraordinarily interesting figure of our history, was in Poland practically the last Uniate hierarch with Ukrainian national convictions, and he was the last who, sincerely and without abusing the national name, could desire for the general good of the people—‘as with sons and brothers born of the one Ukrainian nation,’ to use his own words—concord and peace with the non-united clergy. As a Ukrainian, he could dream of such large-scale plans as a separate Ukrainian patriarchate, modeled on the Muscovite one.”

And as a Ukrainian he remained the type of true martyr, whom an iron character and a deep love for the idea did not allow to fall into doubt or abandon everything. As a Ukrainian, he wished to make the Union a national confession, as Likowski writes—and this at a time when his own people were themselves becoming deserters from the national front, strengthening hostile ranks, eastern or western...

“The non-Uniates mock the united,” he wrote to Rome, “saying that the Union has deprived Ukraine of her finest adornment, namely her knightly estate, and has become only a bridge into Latinism.”

He was fully conscious that from every side a hostile flood threatened the Union... for he wrote to Rome:

“By the year 1624, two hundred youths of the noble schools had changed rite, and the same number among those serving in the courts of the military.”

The Atlas grieved over this... he sought help in Rome and fought on, though he knew that **“the interest of the state requires that the Uniates not be prevented from passing into the Latin rite.”

Such was Rutsky—a model of an Apostle and a Leader—an extraordinary figure, glorious yet unknown to his own compatriots.

To set Him upon a pedestal today, in our stern moment, a pedestal worthy of His glorious name and deeds; to reveal the full stature and breadth of His designs, His eagle-like flights; to grasp Him in synthesis upon the canvas of daily life—this is the worthy homage owed to His glorious memory, to His work, to His struggle.

The Life Path of the Giant.

Such was the will of Providence—that precisely from a non-Catholic environment emerged those who came to lead Ukrainian Catholicism, who shaped its content, and who sowed new, fertile seed into the life-giving black soil of the Ukrainian soul.

And Rutsky, too, came into the Ukrainian Catholic Church from an alien milieu, from a foreign heretical faith—Calvinism—which at that time was a “fashionable” foreign religion among certain circles of the Ukrainian aristocracy.

But Rutsky was not only a religious convert in the monumental sense. He was also a national convert. Historian Chubaty writes as follows:

“Strange are the paths of Divine Providence, which on the road of modern Ukrainian history place before us figures who unexpectedly appear among us from a foreign environment, uncover upon Ukrainian soil their traditions—traditions that seemed long since lost—and through their work among the Ukrainian people build for themselves a monument aere perennius; and their names, with the addition ‘bene pro patria meriti,’ pass

into the pantheon of national rebirth. These names are Mazepa, Orlyk, Rutsky, Mohyla...”

From another side, the history of the Catholic Church shows us that the greatest zeal in the struggle against the tumultuous forces of opposition, the greatest fervor in spreading the ideas of Christ, has been and continues to be shown by converts—and this on all fronts: in politics, journalism, literature, the defense of Catholic dogma, and elsewhere.

A brilliant example: Cardinal Newman and Chesterton in England—of the latter it is written that through his works he brought more of his countrymen to the Catholic Church than hundreds of preachers. Similarly great were the Italian Papini, the Russian philosopher Soloviev, and the northern converts Jørgensen, Sigrid Undset, Selma Lagerlöf, and others. After wandering for a time at the crossroads of the Herculean path, these giants moored at the peaceful harbor of the Catholic Church and gave her everything: their talents, their skill and discipline of work, their hearts and souls, their ideals and dreams.

Such a great convert—both religious and national—was Rutsky... a convert-giant, who led the Ukrainian Catholic Church out of the chaos of anarchy and disorganization, gave her a firm organizational structure, and through his reforms raised her from decline to new heights.

The successor of Hypatius Potij on the metropolitan throne, Rutsky first saw the light of day on the farmstead of Ruta near Novhorodok, in 1571 or 1573. By a wondrous miracle he was baptized according to our rite, although his parents were Calvinists. Clearly, the hand of Providence was already leading this youth at dawn toward the heights of truth, preparing for him in the future a great mission. As a student of the Calvinist school in Vilnius, he distinguished himself from the grey mass of pupils by his virtues and

exceptional qualities. His frequent attendance at the sermons of the Jesuit Fathers in the Vilnius churches led to a prohibition against his entering Catholic sanctuaries. Yet this only became an additional stimulus for the further efforts of a soul thirsting for truth—a soul pure, crystalline, and youthful: the soul of Ivan.

And the divine ray of truth kindled in his heart already in Vilnius... only to burst into flame later abroad, as the result of an inner conflict in his search for truth between Catholicism and Calvinism. His stay at the court of Princess Zaslavska, and his observation of the already decaying Orthodox atmosphere there, only strengthened his convictions.

In 1590, after the death of his father, Rutsky departed for studies in Prague, where under the influence of the Jesuits he fulfilled his intention in 1592: he made a profession of the Catholic faith in the Latin rite into the hands of the rector of the Jesuit college. The next stage of his life's journey—already as a warrior in the struggle, the conflict of the first decision—was marked by a second, deeper conflict that followed from the first. When Rutsky's mother learned that her son had become a Catholic, she refused him further financial support. The young doctor of philosophy was forced to choose between the love and will of his mother, and the truth... And he chose the truth. He conquered a second time, and followed Christ entirely. And Christ did not abandon him.

Through the efforts of the Jesuit Boxer, abbot of the Jesuit monastery in Vilnius, he was admitted to the Greek College of St. Athanasius in Rome, founded by Pope Gregory XIII in 1577 for the formation of clergy of the Eastern rite. Here, under the influence of Pope Clement VIII, he exchanged the Latin rite for the Greek rite and made an oath of fidelity to that rite until death. His four-year stay in the heart of the Catholic Church—in eternal

Rome, the city where every span of earth is richly watered with Christian blood, a city that still preserves memorials of countless martyrs, speaking out of the mist of antiquity about a Glorious Yesterday—strengthened the young soul of Rutsky with steadfastness and firm temper in the struggle for truth, enkindled in him a white-hot love for the Catholic Church, and gave him a disciplined method of work.

All that he acquired in Rome he would later give fully to the Ukrainian Catholic Church and use brilliantly for her elevation.

If we add that his contact with the center of European culture in Rome—a culture nurtured by the Church—captivated his soul with the idea of grafting it onto his native soil, of uniting in synthesis our spiritual treasures with those of the West, then we shall have a faithful image of the soul of Rutsky during his Roman years. He studied, deepened his knowledge, prepared his weapons for the coming struggle, and longed for the moment when the Greek Church would be united with Rome.

History has preserved for us a letter of Velyamyn from this period. It is a letter to Prince Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł, dated 15 February 1603. At the beginning of the letter, Rutsky notes that he wishes to give the prince news from the Eastern and Greek lands, about which fresh reports arrived monthly to the college. The Spartans of the Peloponnese, Rutsky writes, maintain *professio perpetuae militiae et libertatis*, refusing to have anything in common with the Turks and maintaining their own republic. He continues:

“The Metropolitan of Larissa himself has arrived in Rome, one of the twelve who elect the Patriarch, a steadfast man of ancient

probity. He has already made a profession of faith and has submitted obedience to the Apostolic See in his own name.”

Rutsky rejoices at this: “*We have great hope in him,*” and recounts the history of this Metropolitan of Larissa: he had financially supported Michael Palaeologus, who intended to restore the Greek-Latin empire on the territory of the ancient Greek empire, and for this reason he had been deposed from his see. But he has “*some other intention, as is quite clear to us: that he is treating the manner of uniting the Eastern Church with the Roman.*”

A secondary aim of his plans was the liberation of Greece or the Peloponnese from the Turks.

This same Metropolitan was known also in Ukraine, for “*together with Jeremiah some years ago, having been in our lands and in Muscovy, they worked for union and had already reached substantial agreement.*” Envoys had already been sent to Rome, but on the way someone betrayed the plan in Constantinople, and Jeremiah was deposed from the throne: “*And thus the matter at that time collapsed.*”

Likowski notes that Jeremiah unwillingly consecrated Rahoza—who had been educated in the Jesuit college of Vilnius—as Metropolitan of Kyiv. In light of Rutsky’s letter, this acquires a different character: Jeremiah II evidently consecrated as metropolitan a candidate favorable to union with Rome, desiring to have like-minded men on episcopal and metropolitan thrones. His hopes were quickly fulfilled: Metropolitan Rahoza carried out the Union of Brest in 1596.

Rutsky further writes that the Pope favors the plans of the Metropolitan of Larissa: “*Our Most Holy Father has permitted him everything that he does not grant to other Greek bishops who flee to Rome.*” Only the Turks stood in

the way of the Union. And the great Son of Ukraine grieves over her fate as she sinks into schism: “*It is only our obstinate Rus’ which refuses to abandon error, calling itself Greek.*” Finally, he notes the decline of theological studies in Greece: the representatives of Greek theology had died, and now “*all Greek scholarship is preserved in our college.*”

After finishing his studies, Rutsky returned in 1603 to Belarus. But Metropolitan Hypatius Potij received him coldly, gave him no assignment, and instructed him to go abroad with Prince Radziwiłł’s sons. Rutsky’s heart was troubled; in him arose again an inner conflict concerning the change of rite. He appealed to Rome, but he was not released from the oath of the Athanasian College.

Something else resolved the matter: his acquaintance with St. Josaphat, then a monk of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Vilnius, inspired Rutsky with the conviction that the cause of union was by no means lost, for it had such confessors as St. Josaphat. And so Rutsky entered the Basilian Order (OSBM) with the plan of carrying out his designs—to dedicate himself entirely to the service of God through service to the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Ukrainian people.

Already in 1608 Potij appointed him general vicar for the entire Lithuanian part of the metropolis, and in 1609 archimandrite of the Holy Trinity Monastery. In every position entrusted to him Rutsky showed great zeal, prudence, and concern for the good of the Church. Moved by this, Potij obtained the consent of the king and the Holy Father for Rutsky’s appointment as his coadjutor with the right of succession, and during his lifetime as auxiliary bishop with the title *Bishop of Halych*.

This occurred in 1611. Thus the moment was drawing near when the leadership of the Ukrainian Catholic Church was to be taken up by the one

who would lead her to the heights, who through his reforms would give her enduring foundations for centuries. Ideas were arising and maturing in his luminous mind—ideas that he would carry out with iron consistency as Metropolitan, as the leader of the Church. Potij could rest peacefully when he had such fervent assistants as Rutsky and Kuncevyč. He himself was a distinguished figure of Ukrainian history, one of the three pioneers of the Union, who remained unbending throughout his entire life—standing firmly against the fierce opposition of the non-united and the Protestants, and against the wavering of the Uniates. Without supporters at the royal court, without a reliable clergy (which had fallen low both morally and intellectually), relying only on God's justice and the righteous cause of union, he plunged into the whirlwind of struggle at an age when one would normally rest.

Hypatius Potij became a writer, jurist, and orator. His works, as Kalinka writes, possess all the features of the sixteenth century: they are noble and elegant in form, filled with beauty and power. With such a representative, the cause of the Union assumed a different significance. The metropolitan ceased to be a dead figure with whom arrogant magnates or a deceitful patriarch toyed at will. He made his presence known from the first moment, when he wrote to the rebellious clergy of Slutsk: "This is not a matter with Rahoza!"

At the end of his life, a martyr's aureole shone above him (after the assassination attempt of the schismatics). After eighteen years of labor he departed this world, supported like a patriarch by his two sons: Rutsky and Kuncevyč, to whom he entrusted the continuation of the holy and great work that he himself had so worthily carried forward.

He died peacefully. His earlier hesitations regarding Rutsky proved unfounded. Yet he had reasons for them. As a good shepherd he remembered the venerable principle: *Caveant consules ne quid detrimenti Ecclesia capiat!* (“Let the overseers beware, lest the Church suffer any harm!”)

Before accepting Rutsky, he posed a pressing question to himself:

Would this pupil of the Latin Church, full of foreign habits, keep in his heart the preservation of the Greek rite, without which union would be impossible?

Would he, through imprudent imitation of Latin ceremonies or ritual innovations, scandalize or alienate the Ukrainians?

Indeed, for ten years the non-united Ukrainians had cried out that the Union was merely a means to “Latinize” the Eastern Church! But the fervent zeal of Rutsky—as a monk of the Basilian Order, as archimandrite of the Holy Trinity Monastery, as friend and spiritual disciple of St. Josaphat—dispelled these doubts.

The elder died peacefully on 13 July 1613, and Rutsky became a metropolitan. (Some historians give 1614 as the year of Rutsky’s accession to the Metropolia. It is possible that in that year he received full confirmation from the king and from Rome.) Reform of the secular clergy and of the C.Ss.R.

Formed interiorly and spiritually under the influence of St. Josaphat, and being the most learned among the Ukrainian clergy of that time, Rutsky immediately saw in full breadth all the deficiencies of the Ukrainian Church—which, in comparison with the Western Catholic Churches, were very numerous. A long preparation would be needed, long and difficult

labor, to remove these... and to fulfill that which Providence had laid upon his strong shoulders.

The fundamental defect that Rutsky had to remove was undoubtedly the ignorance, lack of formation, lack of discipline, and absence of basic Catholic spirit among the clergy. Therefore the matter of reform became urgent: a) of the secular clergy and b) of the monastic clergy. For in order to reform, to educate, or rather to re-educate the faithful, the people, one must first of all have educators-pastors suitable for this task. The need arose for education, for schools, for a seminary.

And Rutsky set himself to this work with full ardor and zeal. To achieve the goals he had set, he needed a strong and capable staff of collaborators—bishops.

Therefore Rutsky first took care to fill the episcopal sees with good and zealous bishops. Thus: the Volodymyr eparchy he assigned, after the death of Potij, to the zealous defender of the Union and writer Illia Morokhovsky, author of *Parigoria*, the *Report on the Murder of St. Josaphat*, the translation from Greek of the *Life of St. Ignatius* and the *Dialogue on the Beginning of the Separation of the Greek Church from the Roman Church*. The author is remarkable for his talent. He notes that the Orthodox opposed him because Uniate priests preached in the Ukrainian language and called it a papal invention.

In the Lutsk eparchy he appointed as bishop Jeremiah Pochapovsky in 1621, who zealously defended the Union and perished, likely poisoned by the schismatics. In Kholm he appointed as many as four successive bishops: the first three were disciples of St. Josaphat: I. Arsenii Andriievsky, II. Athanasius Pakosta, III. Theodor Meleshkevych (who died on the day of his

consecration), IV. Methodius Terletsky, Doctor of Theology, personal friend of Emperor Ferdinand II. It was to him that Urban VIII said the memorable words: “*Per vos mei Rutheni Orientem convertendum spero.*” In Pinsk the bishops were disciples of Rutsky: 1. Paisii Sakhovsky, 2. Hryhor Mykhailovych, and 3. Raphael Korsak, Rutsky’s successor in the Metropolia (author of the biographical work *Vita Rutscii*). In the Polatsk eparchy, to assist the weakened Archbishop Hedeon Brolnytsky, he appointed as coadjutor his sincere friend, St. Josaphat. Concerning him the Muscophile Belarussian Hovorsky writes that Rutsky could not have made a better choice for the expansion of the Union in the Polatsk eparchy.

Strengthened by such a powerful staff of collaborators, united by one idea, one faith, one zeal—for the spreading of the glory of God—Rutsky began his further salutary reforms. The secular clergy had to be raised before all else out of complete decline. The priesthood lacked spirit, and understood their state as a trade. Priests celebrated the Divine Service only when they were paid for it; there was no question of discipline. Would not Rutsky’s noble heart break over such ruin! How many misfortunes had such unworthy priests brought upon the Ukrainian Church! How could they fulfill their lofty vocation?

Reform of the clergy became necessary and immediate. As soon as Rutsky received from Pope Paul V the privilege of founding schools throughout the entire Metropolia, he immediately established two colleges at the Basilian monasteries in Minsk and Novhorodok, and later schools in Zhyrovichy, Volodymyr, and Boruny. In these schools the future levites, servants of the altar, were to receive their education.

However, these schools proved insufficient for the following reasons: I. they did not provide interior formation, for the candidates lived privately, and II. they provided only a general and weak education.

Therefore the urgent need for a Spiritual Seminary arose, a Ukrainian Catholic institution of higher learning. None of Rutsky's predecessors had taken care of this matter, not even Hypatius Potij, who in letters to Sapieha complained that he had nothing to live on. Rutsky, having understood the great importance of such a school, devoted himself heart and soul to its organization and carried out his epoch-making plan.

In truth, in Vilnius there existed a *sui generis* seminary, of which Rutsky had been rector in 1604, but it was used only by the Basilians, for it had been founded exclusively as a seminary for Basilians. It was a novitiate combined with studies, and therefore Potij called this institution a seminary, because he could not call it otherwise, since it was neither pure novitiate nor pure *studium*. It is known that for canonical reasons a novitiate cannot yet be turned into a study house. But this was an exceptional situation for us. Good and educated monks were needed immediately.

On the need for such a Ukrainian Catholic institution of higher learning Rutsky wrote in his work *Discursus cujusdam Rutheni de corrigendo regimine in ritu graeco*, published in Vilnius in January 1605 (he was then rector of the Vilnius "seminary"). Already then he solved the fundamental problem of reform: "In the Ukrainian Church it will be possible to raise education only when it is in union with Rome." For history itself proves that in the East learning and holiness of life flourished only so long as it was in union with Rome; but when this unity was broken, once-flourishing cities such as Ephesus, Caesarea, Antioch, Constantinople, Alexandria—which had produced such luminaries as St. John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Gregory

the Theologian, Dionysius of Alexandria, John of Damascus, Origen, and others—fell into ruin. And all this because the disappearance of spirit, the disappearance of the guiding idea that followed the schism, brought only dissolution. The Byzantine particularism, its further consequence, is still atoning for itself even today in the territories that were under Byzantine hegemony.

Rutsky further demonstrates from personal observation the superiority of ecclesiastical schools over secular ones. As an example he cites the Jesuit schools. What speaks in favor of ecclesiastical schools is that besides knowledge they also teach piety and fear of God. Therefore he asserts that monks are better teachers than seculars. Having settled this matter, Rutsky poses a third question: Where is it better to obtain an education—in one's own schools or in foreign ones?

And he answers: only the native, Ukrainian school for Ukrainian youth. The reasons are the following: with the decline of the Greek Church in all spheres of life, the youth of the Greek rite, seeing the superiority of the Roman rite, usually abandon their own Church and pass over to the Latin rite. (Rutsky himself is a most eloquent example of this, having accepted the Latin rite and not wishing to return to the Greek rite — author's note.) For this reason Pope Gregory XIII, founder of the Greek College, set as a fundamental requirement the oath of fidelity to the Greek rite for those who would be formed in this college.

And his educational intentions and plans, grounded in such concrete considerations, he would carry out with iron consistency. He did this in order to save the Ukrainian Church, which, in a hostile environment, had become shaken. "He, who came to us from among strangers, became more native to his new Church and his new Homeland than the dearest of kin." And as one ardently devoted to the Ukrainian Catholic Church, he, like a giant-eagle, spreads his wings to soar toward the heights, into the blue expanse of truth, that he might lift and carry his Church up to those heights. Therefore he forges weapons for the thousands of knights of his idea — the weapons of education, of the strengthening of spirit and will — which will be acquired by the ever-new phalanxes of Christ's fighters in the schools of Rutsky.

These are the stages of Rutsky's educational activity on the road toward the seminary: I. 1613: the Basilian novitiate in Byten, and schools for Basilians in Novhorodok and Minsk (they taught all sciences there, and among languages: Greek, Latin, Slavonic, Polish, and Ukrainian; the rights and privileges of these schools were the same as those of the Jesuits); II. 1615: the school in Minsk at the Cosmas and Damian monastery; III. 1617: as Pelesh

records, still another school was founded in Polatsk at the monastery, and the nobleman A. Chreptovych founded a monastic school in Krasnobor. All these schools, like those already mentioned above in Zhyrovichy, Volodymyr, and Boruny, were intended for candidates to the clerical state in the secular clergy.

On 13 December 1615, after long efforts, Rutsky received the brief of Pope Paul V — “Piis et devotis” — by which the Uniate schools of Rutsky were granted the rights of the Jesuit schools. Rutsky sent the more capable candidates for the clerical state to study abroad. As one himself formed in foreign schools, he properly appreciated the meaning and importance of education obtained in the cultural centers of Europe, in the Catholic universities of the West. There, besides acquiring professional knowledge, students encountered face to face the high Catholic culture that pulsed warmly with full life under the wings of the Church — they absorbed the elements of this culture so that later they might graft the acquired light upon their native soil. Their return home always brought with it a fresh breeze, sharp as the mountain air, into the stagnant atmosphere of their homeland.

They sowed new ideas; with their sharpness and activity they stirred the calm surface of native waters—of life. Rome met Rutsky’s intentions halfway. Pope Paul V in 1615 issued a decree by which four Ukrainian students were to receive places in the Greek College in Rome; besides this, the same Pope endowed eighteen scholarship places for Ukrainian students in various European Catholic universities.

Yet even these measures were still insufficient. The new needs and demands required many new priests. The urgent problem of a higher school, a seminary, demanded a necessary solution, which, unfortunately, various obstacles continued to delay.

But Rutsky cared not only about the number of schools. He surrounded their *quality* with equal concern. Today, from a perspective of more than 300 years, his school programs for Ukrainian youth are valuable and dear to us. Valuable: because they show that he grounded the education of Ukrainian youth on sound Catholic principles. All instruction, intertwined with spiritual exercises, was directed to one goal: to give candidates for the clerical state above all piety and education in a strictly Catholic spirit. And his schools are dear to us because Rutsky, a great European and a Catholic, united into a harmonious whole in his educational program what was best in the West with what was best in the East.

A brilliant testimony to this is Rutsky's letter to the students of the Greek College in Rome from the year 1624. Rutsky reports that he had been in Novhorodok and explains his impressions of the school there. The daily academic schedule of that school was as follows: in the forenoon they read controversies in the Ukrainian language—and in the afternoon *tempore pomeridiano* the *casus conscientiae*. They further read the works of St. John of Damascus—*Quattuor libri de fide orthodoxa*. Every doubt and objection was resolved by adding explanations to the texts. And most important: they read the entire *Summa* of St. Thomas.

Thus: John of Damascus and St. Thomas, the Ukrainian language of instruction. Rutsky harmoniously joined in one the highest flight of the genius of Catholic philosophical thought in the West with the equally high flight of theological thought in the East—and all of this in Ukrainian form, in the native language! Clearly, it would hardly be possible to devise a better plan even today. In its foundations, this is, one might say, the ideology of Ukrainian Catholicism. When we add that nearly all the other Eastern Fathers were also read there obligatorily—such as Basil the Great, John

Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, and others—we obtain a complete picture of this glorious educational plan.

The native language, whose importance Rutsky properly understood and valued, was to attract youth and preserve them from denationalization, which threatened them in the Polish Jesuit schools. In the letter mentioned above Rutsky writes these ardent words, full of burning love and enthusiasm for the native language: “*Et tunc videbunt Rutheni, quod veri sumus Rutheni et linguam nostram ornamus.*” (And then the Ruthenians will see that we are true Ruthenians and that we honor our language.) What love and reverence for the native language breathes from these words of the Atlas of the Union!

But once the wheel of education had been set into motion, it marked for itself an ever wider and faster course... What had once been new became, in time, old—no longer corresponding to growing needs.

And those new needs continued to grow. Before the Ukrainian-Catholic Church wide horizons were opening, new work, and there was a shortage of laborers. The matter of the seminary was approaching its happy completion.

With that seminary, his intimate and cherished dream, Rutsky connected far-reaching plans: 1. the formation of Catholic clergy, 2. the spread and strengthening of the Union among the people, and finally 3. missionary plans: the conversion to unity of Right-Bank Ukraine, Muscovy, and Wallachia. But to realize these intentions, two things were necessary: 1. funds for the seminary, which Rutsky did not have, and 2. permission from Rome to establish that school.

As soon as Pope Gregory XV gave permission, Rutsky began to seek funds. His first steps he directed to Rome, in order to obtain the funds promised by

Pope Clement VIII to the Ukrainian bishops after the Union of Brest for the founding of a seminary. The matter of support from Rome was important both morally and materially. The moral aspect—the help of the Supreme Ruler to His distant subject, the Ukrainian Church—was a symbol of love, unity, and shared aims. And that help came. At the frequent requests of Rutsky, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith decided to donate 1000 scudi, which were sent. But this was still too little.

The second source of income for this cause, church properties, had been seized by the non-united. Later, after the death of Ostrozky, who had seized the largest latifundia of the Ukrainian Church, these passed into the hands of the Jesuits, because Janusz Ostrozky, being a Pole, donated the property seized by his father from the Ukrainian Church to the Polish Jesuits. To recover these goods by legal means was an impossibility. Rutsky turned to Rome for help. Rome ordered the Jesuits to send two representatives to Ukraine with the purpose of returning the property to the Ukrainian Church. But nothing came of that intervention.

Heavy sorrow pressed upon Rutsky's chest. But it never overcame his resolve. The Ukrainian episcopate must provide help for the seminary!

And they did not refuse their help. At the Synod in Kobryn on 6 September (old style) 1626, it was unanimously decided to found the seminary. All the bishops taxed themselves according to their means for this purpose, and the Metropolitan himself donated 10,000 złoty and the revenues from his properties and eparchy. Finally, all the monasteries dependent on the proto-archimandrite agreed to pay every four years 1/8 of their income, and the Minsk monastery was attached to the seminary, which was soon opened. Informed of this by a letter from the episcopate, Pope Urban VIII blessed

this glorious undertaking and called the Ukrainian bishops the seven lights of the Ukrainian Church.

The seminary was housed in a building purchased from the townsman Holovchynsky in Minsk. This city was less Polonized than Vilnius and was better suited for this purpose, because “*tota ferme est Ruthena, pauci in ea Latini, scholae latinae nullae*” (almost entirely Ukrainian, with a few Poles, and no Latin schools), as Rutsky wrote to the students of the Greek College. And the further reasons why Minsk, as a Ukrainian environment, was to become the location for the seminary are given by Rutsky as follows: “*Latini enim pro antiqua sua consuetudine depriment nostra, quae nos erigere volumus et dum crescent res nostrae putabunt sibi injuriam fieri, sicut experientia notum est et ibi facile aperiremus omnes scholas et converteretur ad nos juvenus ex toto illo tractu*” — (For the Poles, according to their ancient custom, oppress everything that we wish to build up, and when our affairs rise, they think an injustice is being done to them, as is well known from experience; whereas there we could easily open all our schools and the youth from that whole region would turn to us.)

These words also contain the truth about Ukrainian–Polish relations in history. Rutsky clearly writes about the oppression and envy of the Poles at every step of our growth. History repeats itself even today, and the words of Rutsky about this matter are as relevant now as they were 300 years ago.

The rector and professors of the seminary were to be Basilian Fathers. The academic plan, apart from the Ukrainian language of instruction, is not known in detail. One may deduce that it was similar to the plan of the Greek

College in Rome and the school in Novhorodok, in the spirit of Rutsky's program. Candidates were admitted to studies not only from among active members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, but also those "who had parents of the Greek rite or who had been baptized in it." All were required to take an oath that they would remain in the Greek rite until death.

It was Rutsky's desire that from the seminary, with its missionary character, there should come forth celibate priests, for only such could be good apostles of ecclesiastical union. From it were to come teachers and visitors throughout the dioceses, into various parts of Ukraine—for a great wave was approaching, great tasks before the Ukrainian Catholic Church: "... Novam nobis obtulit messem Dominus messis, ducatum scilicet Smolenscensem et Severiae nuper a Moschis receptum." (The Lord of the harvest offers us a new harvest, namely the Duchy of Smolensk and Severia, recently recovered from the Muscovites.) Thus missionary intentions were cherished in the heart of Rutsky. For the matter of forming missionaries—celibate priests—upon the open territories of labor was bound up with the future of the Union, of Ukraine, and of the entire East. This was already a concrete awareness of the Ukrainian mission, the rationale and meaning of our nation's existence precisely on the frontier of two worlds. For the Union, as Guépin–Kalinka rightly writes, if it wished to live, it had to go forward, to win new gains for the Church. To shut itself within its own boundaries, to remain only on the defensive, meant to condemn itself to gradual withering.

And the Ukrainian people, who could best know and understand God's intentions toward them only in union, were at that time broken, enslaved, and dispersed by schism. (I speak of the non-united Ukrainian population — author's note.) These divine plans were understood by the luminous, great mind of Rutsky, and he devoted himself to them entirely. Already in old age

the Metropolitan himself wished to dedicate himself to the apostolate of Muscovy. Rutsky, conscious of that exalted idea of the Ukrainian mission given us by God, intended to realize it through his seminary. He conceived and carried out that which 280 years later would be written so beautifully by the one historian-catholic who resembled Rutsky both in spirit and in origin, Vyacheslav Lypynsky. Both understood this mission in this way: that Ukraine, as a forward post of Catholicism in the East, as the vanguard of Catholic Europe, Western culture and civilization, the synthesis of East and West, must become the bearer of Catholicism, must unite the East with Rome. And when today the missionary intention of apostolic work among the non-united is connected with the figure of Metropolitan Rutsky, and we rightly proclaim him Patron of this idea, it is only a modest tribute to the glorious memory of the One who crystallized and realized that idea more than three hundred years ago.

And he had full support from Rome, which in the person of its supreme representative and leader, the Holy Father Pope Urban VIII, related to the Ukrainian Catholic Church with extraordinary warmth and sympathy. And this great and glorious Pope spoke these words about the Ukrainian mission to the Bishop of Kholm, the Basilian Methodius Terletsky: “Per vos mei Rutheni Orientem convertendum spero.” And these immortal, prophetic words of our Supreme Spiritual Head are without doubt the voice of Jesus Christ Himself, spoken through the mouth of His Vicar. For Ukraine they are the idea and program, the highest, the noblest; they are the rationale and meaning of the existence of our nation. They are the brightest manifestation of the Ukrainian mission.

In the already mentioned letter of Rutsky to the Propaganda regarding the prospects of missionary work of the graduates of the Minsk Seminary,

Rutsky sets forth the reasons why precisely the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the Ukrainian clergy, can and alone is called to spread the Union in the Eastern lands. Metropolitan Rutsky notes clearly from the very beginning that: “*praedictae nationes omnes per nullum Latinorum ex schismate ad unitatem fidei catholicae converti poterunt — sed solum per Ruthenos unitos. Magnam quippe a Latinis habent aversionem et similium facilius transmutatio est, quam dissimilium.*” (All the aforementioned nations can be converted from schism to the unity of the Catholic faith by none of the Latins, but only by the united Ruthenians. For they have a strong aversion to Latins, and the transformation of similar peoples is easier than that of dissimilar ones.) And who has greater similarity to these nations than the Ukrainians: similar vernacular language, church books, literary language, liturgical language, and finally the same rites?

Let us compare point VIII of the resolutions of the First Union Congress of Lviv with the arguments of Rutsky, and we will see that this point says nothing new beyond what Metropolitan Rutsky had already said in 1626. Hence the clear vitality and strength of Rutsky’s ideas and arguments, which have not faded after 311 years and will not fade as long as the matter of uniting the Slavic East with Rome remains relevant. The second hope of Rutsky connected with the Seminary is the already mentioned “celibate secular clergy, long unknown on Ukrainian ecclesiastical soil, yet so ardently desired by many, being a special dream of the united Ukrainians.” These missionary intentions Rutsky explains in his letter to the students of the Greek College already in 1624.

And thus the monumental plan of the great European Rutsky became a fact; a high Catholic school came into existence on Ukrainian lands, as a hearth of learning and truth, as a source of new strength in spreading the Kingdom of

Christ. And it is not important whether it arose a year later or two after the Kobryn synod, just as it is not important that it may have had gaps in instruction and material resources; what matters is that the idea of higher education for Ukrainian servants of the altar was fully realized by the first Metropolitan Rutsky. It is not important whether it arose independently or through the transfer of the Cosmas and Damian school to the monastery of the Holy Spirit, as some claim. The Minsk Seminary existed until 1655, when it was destroyed by the Muscovite attack on Minsk. After the Cossack wars the seminary was restored, but its superiors, the Basilians, who out of envy did not desire higher education for the secular clergy, caused its decline. And when in 1755 the wife of the Brest voivode donated 27,000 złoty for the restoration of this seminary, the Basilians did not restore the seminary but used the money for their own needs. Is this how they repaid the glorious memory of Rutsky for raising them from ruin through the reform of the Basilian Order and giving them interior spirit, piety, and education? The Basilians can in no way justify the harm caused by this action.

In the end, the seminary and other educational initiatives of Rutsky preceded the similar plans and works of Mohyla, who alone can be seen as his equal in this respect. But Mohyla had better conditions, the help of the government, of the Cossacks, and, who knows, perhaps the ready and favorable ground created by Rutsky, unquestionably the most important Ukrainian Catholic pioneer of education in Ukraine in the seventeenth century. For this reason Rutsky is especially dear to candidates for the clerical state, as a great and luminous man, a great patriot, a great pioneer of education, and the first founder of the Ukrainian Catholic theological Seminary and the author of its extraordinarily valuable and always relevant educational program in the spirit of his well-known synthesis.

Thus we clearly see that through his salutary reforms and educational work, through the schools and above all through the Seminary, Rutsky raised the secular clergy from decline and placed it upon a worthy pedestal.

Reform of the Basilian Order (OSBM)

Understanding fully the importance of a well-organized monasticism imbued with the spirit of piety and discipline in the Church, being bound to the Basilian Order also by monastic profession, by his work as hegumen of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Vilnius, and by his friendship with St. Josaphat, Rutsky desired to lift that Order out of decline. The shortcomings of the Order were: 1. the decline of discipline and spirit; 2. the decline of education; and 3. fundamental defects in the organizational structure of the Order. To reach further goals, it was necessary to reorganize the Order. It was necessary to carry out its centralization, which would make possible oversight and unity of the monasteries among themselves.

With that purpose Rutsky convened a chapter of the Order's hegumens in Novogrudok for 20 July 1617. To those gathered the Metropolitan presented: a) the necessity of reform of the Basilian Order, b) he outlined his own plan of reform. Rutsky presided at this chapter and said then the following words about monastic life and the purpose of the Order: "The goal of the Order is the glory of God—and the means to this is the improvement of the spiritual estate. The spiritual estate cannot be improved in any other way than through the renewal, the reform, of the Order."

At the mentioned chapter, which Fr. Karovets calls a "council," the following far-reaching decrees were adopted: 1. All Ukrainian and Belarusian monasteries are to constitute one congregation, at the head of which shall stand the proto-archimandrite, and the Metropolitan shall be the protector

of the Order. 2. The manner of electing the proto-archimandrite and the hegumens was determined. 3. Norms and prescriptions were issued for the novitiate. 4. It was resolved that such a general chapter was to convene every four years. And thus began the work of raising the Basilian Order, a work difficult and responsible before the history of the Church, for this Order provided candidates for leading positions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The second chapter at Lavryshiv, in 1621, issued further reform decrees: confession every week, renewal of monastic vows, the determination of what the superior must be like, how he must care for the studying youth, poverty, uniformity of rite in the liturgical services, and the writing of monastic chronicles. All the decrees of this chapter Rutsky approved, and as a fully formulated rule for the Order he commanded them to all monasteries. These rules of Rutsky were published in Vilnius in 1771 under the title: “Ustawy S. O. Bazylego W., przez ś. p. X. Welamina Ruckiego.” In addition to this, two manuscripts of these rules are found in the library of the Basilian monastery on Chernecha Hora in Transcarpathian Ukraine. They were reprinted in the *Annals of the Basilian Order*, vol. 1, 1934. These rules contain the following sections: introduction, 1. concerning chastity, 2. concerning obedience, and 3. the manner of common life. In the introduction the purpose of monastic perfection is explained as follows: “The end of the monastic life is to become a perfect person in the mercy of God, to become like unto God in mercy, to which end one must draw not only oneself through godly thought and diligent works, but also one’s neighbor—by word, deed, and the example of a pious life—by means leading to the attainment of that end.” (*Annals of the Basilian Order*, vol. I, 1934, p. 57). A Ukrainian translation of the rules was published in two editions by Metropolitan Sheptytsky in 1909 and 1910.

Rutsky convened the third chapter at his family estate of Ruta on 6 July 1623. St. Josaphat was present at it. The subject of the deliberations was how to prevent quarrels, dissensions, and discord within the Order. It was decided that the Basilians were to take an oath of fidelity to Metropolitan Rutsky and to their own rite. The fourth chapter took place in Lavryshiv in 1626, and the fifth in Zhirovychi in 1629.

Rutsky continued the work begun by Potij concerning the education of the monks. Besides the already mentioned schools (the novitiate in Byten and the monastic school in Krasnobar), he secured that Pope Paul V, responding to Rutsky's efforts, provided 22 scholarships for united Basilian students at various European universities in 1615. From these foreign schools emerged a new clergy educated in the Western manner. It caused the strong growth of the Basilian Order, which became the greatest help and support of the Union. "The Basilians soon founded three of their own printing presses in Vilnius, Suprasl, and Pochaiv, where books were printed that spread religious and national consciousness." Before long they also began missionary work, and many of them were deemed worthy of a martyr's death for the Union. Therefore the Order must indeed be grateful to Metropolitan Rutsky: "The Order of St. Basil the Great owes its reform, without which it would have neither education, nor spirit, nor God's help, nor the merits necessary for deepening and strengthening the holy Union, and without which it would have no martyrs."

The Basilian Sisters owe to Rutsky the extraordinarily valuable "Extract from the Rules of St. Basil the Great," which remains to this day an invaluable rule for their monastic life. Thus through his saving reform, Rutsky secured for the Order of St. Basil the Great its existence for hundreds

of years, until the new reform carried out by the Jesuits in the nineteenth century.

Struggle with the Non-United.

Strengthening and cementing the ecclesiastical organism from within by his reforms, Rutsky was preparing it for outward expansion, for the offensive battle-act for the honor of Christ's banners. He was preparing regiments of soldiers who would carry the flaming torch of the Union to the East, who would unite all Ukraine and Moscow with the Roman Apostolic Throne, and who would ignite in the East a great blaze of the Holy Faith.

At the same time as this outward action, it was also necessary at home to defend the positions that had been taken against various enemies. Therefore the front of Rutsky and of the Ukrainian Catholic Church under his leadership would have both a) an offensive and b) a defensive character. The defensive front, which would often turn into an offensive one, was the long, drawn-out struggle with the non-united in defense of the Ukrainian Catholic Church—a struggle all the more difficult because Rutsky and our entire Church had to wage it against their own brothers, who on the opposite side, in hostile positions, would be organized and inflamed for battle and endurance by the agents of Byzantium and Moscow. Under their influence the Cossacks, who had until then not involved themselves in religious disputes, would become enemies of the Union and inflict many heavy blows upon it.

Rutsky directed his first offensive steps, as was proper, to the heart of Ukraine—Kyiv, the “Mother of Rus’ cities.” Already from the fifteenth century Ukrainian metropolitans resided in Vilnius or Novogrudok, though they were metropolitans of Kyiv and Kyiv was their capital. This came about

when, after Tatar-Muscovite raids and frequent wars, Kyiv had fallen into great decline and had become unsuitable as a residence. Besides this, the distance between Kyiv and the central authorities and the nunciature in Warsaw was too great, and thus communications were difficult. Yet the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy and the people regarded Kyiv as the cradle of the faith and the principal bastion of the Church.

Therefore Metropolitan Rutsky resolved to visit his capital and to take possession of his cathedral church of St. Sophia, in order thereby to declare the absolute right of the highest Ukrainian Hierarch to the Ukrainian shrine, to offer homage to the shades of his ancestors and homage to tradition. Despite great labors and dangers, Rutsky arrived in the company of St. Josaphat in Kyiv in 1616. Kyiv had been devastated by wars. The monumental church of St. Sophia, a masterpiece of art, carved with harmony and enchantment into the blue horizon with its domes, its mosaics shimmering from afar as a witness to the wealth and brilliance of ancient Kyiv. This temple, against which the communists last year planned to raise their sacrilegious hands—built by Yaroslav the Wise—was to remain for the ages a monument of the union and fidelity of the Ukrainian people to the Apostolic See. It was solemnly consecrated with the participation of the papal legate Alexius in the year 1021, and he celebrated the first solemn liturgy in it. A shifting fortune had separated this dear, precious monument for six centuries from its rightful owners, the Ukrainian Catholic Metropolitans of Kyiv. And only after six centuries did the highest Hierarch of the Ukrainian Church again take possession of it, and the walls of the temple once more heard the majestic Ukrainian liturgy and greeted the sound of hymns and chants to God, from the highest Dignitary of the Ukrainian Catholic Church—Metropolitan Josyf Velyamin Rutsky. The heart of the Atlas rejoiced when he looked upon this wondrous memorial of

native antiquity, precious and priceless to the heart of every Ukrainian Catholic.

At the same time in that year, upon returning to Lithuania, Rutsky intended to convert a greater number of the non-united to the Union. This was to take place through the so-called “Vilnius Disputation” of 1617 on the primacy of the Pope. The Catholic thesis was to be defended by St. Josaphat on the basis of the Eastern liturgical books that even the non-united used. However, the dispute did not take place. The theses of this disputation were published separately as a booklet by the successor of St. Josaphat in the archimandry, Lev Krevza, in 1617. That same year Rutsky also took over the small Vydubychi monastery of St. Michael, in which he appointed as hegumen Fr. Anton Hrekovych, a great enthusiast of the Union. It was he who, together with a handful of brethren, worthily defended the Union and spread it in Kyiv.

On the horizon of relations between the united and the non-united, calm prevailed—mutual discord disappeared—there seemed to be a path toward understanding. But calm did not last long—as if before a storm. With the groaning of the earth and the noise of clouds, the storm approached. Providence was preparing for Rutsky a great chalice of sorrow... a heavy and long struggle! On the Ukrainian horizon there appeared, like a sinister spirit of ruin and decay, the patriarch of Jerusalem, the Greek Theophanes, who sowed upon Ukrainian soil the devil’s tares of hatred, malice, and fratricidal war. He was returning from Moscow, where he had crowned Tsar Michael Romanov (1613–1645), and in 1619 had consecrated his father as patriarch of Moscow. The cunning Greek, like a spirit of discord, cast among the Cossacks the fire of hatred toward the Union, reproached them for their inaction, and incited them against their own brothers. He threatened the

vengeance of heaven if they dared raise weapons against Moscow, which was of one faith with them—but urged them instead to destroy the Union. Latin Catholics he advised should be tolerated. In order to give an organized character to the struggle against the Union, under the protection of the agitated Cossacks, Theophanes on 15 August 1620 consecrated and restored the non-united hierarchy, which after the Union of Brest had no longer existed in Ukraine except in Lviv, where the non-united bishop was Jeremiah Tysarovsky (1607–1641). The new hierarchy was as follows:

1. Counter-metropolitan of Kyiv: Job Boretsky,
2. Bishop of Polotsk: Meletius Smotrytsky,
3. Bishop of Peremyshl: Isaiah Kopynsky,
4. Bishop of Volodymyr: Ezekiel Kurcevych,
5. Bishop of Lutsk: Isaiah Cherchytsky,
6. Bishop of Kholm: Paisius Cherkavsky,
7. Bishop of Pinsk: the Greek Avraamii Stahonsky.

The newly consecrated hierarchy was illegal for two reasons:

1. Patriarch Theophanes had no jurisdiction whatsoever over Ukraine and did not present proof of authorization from the patriarch of Constantinople;
2. The king had not given his consent.

Metropolitan Rutsky immediately excommunicated all the pseudo-bishops and demanded from the king decisive measures in defense of the Union. Sigismund III issued an order for the imprisonment of the “spies and traitors of the Commonwealth,” because they had unlawfully become bishops. Boretsky and Smotrytsky, as well as Theophanes, would likely have met the same fate as the protosyncellus Nikyphoros had it not been for political circumstances. On the political horizon there appeared the specter of a Polish–Turkish war, in which Poland urgently needed Cossack assistance. And the Cossacks, in exchange for their help, demanded recognition of the newly consecrated hierarchy.

In the meantime the non-united bishops began intensified agitation for the seizure of churches and estates from the united. The struggle engulfed the entire land, and its special arena became the Warsaw Sejm. To Warsaw, to the Sejm of 1621, came delegates of the non-united together with Bishop Kurcevych and, through their delegate, the tribune Laurentius Drevyński, demanded recognition of their hierarchy. To secure a majority, they came to an understanding with the Protestants.

The Good Shepherd Rutsky hurried at once to the Sejm to defend his Church, which Pope Urban VIII had called its Column. He appeared there with a brilliant speech in defense of the Union. The Metropolitan declared that the Union had embraced the entire land, described the persecutions endured by the united at the hands of the schismatics, and reminded them that seventy brigands were watching for the opportunity to kill him and the Uniate bishops. He concluded his speech with this heroic declaration: “God is my witness that they will sooner deprive us of life than of our thrones... In a Catholic land—under a Catholic king—our life is threatened. Why? Because we are Catholics!” These words of the Atlas of the Union, filled with prophetic spirit and still relevant today, will shine across the screen of centuries like a pearl of the tragedy of the situation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and a pearl of the courage and heroism of its Leader—the Athanasius of Ukraine, Metropolitan Rutsky.

The papal nuncio Diotallevi zealously aided Rutsky. And King Sigismund III, in unison with Rutsky’s words, as a true Catholic, did not confirm the non-united hierarchy. At the Sejm of 1621, it had already become difficult for Rutsky and his collaborators to defend themselves. Public Polish opinion, in unison with the non-united and the heretics, openly cried out through the mouths of its tribunes: “It would have been better if the Union had never existed; without the Union it would be easier to win over the non-united lords to Catholicism, one after another, whole ‘families’ at a time.” And although the Sejm did not confirm the non-united hierarchy, nevertheless, under pressure from the Cossacks, it moved to meet their demands. St. Josaphat wrote about this in detail in his letter to Chancellor Sapieha. And the chancellor’s reply to St. Josaphat is irrefutable proof of the lack of goodwill—and even of the hostile attitude—of certain ruling Polish state circles toward the Union.

In his biting letter, Chancellor Sapieha states explicitly that the Union is “the culprit of all these misfortunes” that are befalling Poland, and that in this very way it harms the Polish *raison d’état*.

(Exactly the same is written by Fr. Kachala!) The Metropolitan appealed for assistance to Rome. And Pope Gregory XV sent to the turbulent Sejm of 1623, hostile to the Union, a special legate who, together with the nuncio Lancellotti, zealously defended the Union. About those anxious and stormy moments St. Josaphat wrote to Rutsky these memorable words: “... if at that Sejm they prevail over the holy God and His truth, then that lordship is all the nearer to ruin, for through what it sins, through that it can be punished.” The front of the enemies of the Union was further strengthened by the Polish Latin episcopate. Bishop Szyszkowski openly proclaimed at the Sejm: “... The Union was rather harmful than beneficial. For one could rightly expect that this breed of people (*sic!*) without reason would, under the guise of religion, bring disorder upon the Commonwealth.”

And Rutsky, strengthened by the death of St. Josaphat—concerning which he submitted a detailed report to Rome together with a request for the beatification of the hieromartyr—steadfastly endured on the edge of storms and thunder, held his position unshaken, and defended as best he could the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Shoulder to shoulder with him stood his bishops, seized by the same fervor and faith in the holiness of the cause. This is vividly evident from every word of their joint letter to the Propaganda, written on the occasion of the death of St. Josaphat in Novhorodok on 30 January 1624: “We can show no greater sign of love for that Holy Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith than by declaring our readiness to sacrifice our lives and to shed our blood for the Catholic faith, as one of us has already shed his.”

(Majus gratitudinis signum erga hanc sanctam Congregationem de Propaganda Fide exhibere non possumus, quam vitam nostram cum sanguine, prouti jam unus ex nobis profudit pro fide catholica, profundere paratissimos nos offerentes.)

These were not merely words of emphasis, but firm and fervent expressions of faith, which acquired a particular force in view of the fact that several decades later there would occur a collapse of that faith among their successors, on the very fields of their labor. A similar fervor also seized the faithful. The successor of St. Josaphat, Antin Seliava, converted the entire Polotsk archdiocese without difficulty.

But in the South-Western Lands the turmoil continued to boil... The non-united were merely awaiting a more favorable opportunity for a new offensive. That opportunity came with the death of Sigismund III in April 1632. The non-united Metropolitan skillfully checkmated the new king, Władysław IV, by sending an envoy—the non-united Bishop of Lutsk—to the Muscovite Tsar Mikhail Fyodorovich with a request for protection. The king was forced to make concessions to the non-united in order to prevent the interference of foreign powers in Polish affairs. Isaiah Kopynsky (1630–1632), the successor of Boretsky, was compelled to relinquish the metropolitanate. The new Metropolitan became the king's friend, Petro Mohyla (1632–1647).

The new Metropolitan, a man of high education and a European outlook, did not abandon the struggle, but rather gave it a more cultured character. He sought to raise the non-united through education, which was far inferior to that of the united. Therefore, in 1633 he founded the Kyiv Academy (initially called a college) and developed an active cultural and educational program. Mohyla's Academy became a center of culture not only for Ukraine

but also for neighboring lands. He wrote his works almost in a Catholic spirit (catechisms!) and in his activity adhered to the decrees of the Council of Trent (he conducted visitations of the metropolis in accordance with the Tridentine decrees). In spirit he was a Catholic and strove for the reconciliation of “Rus’ with Rus’,” which will be seen later in the matter of the patriarchate. The Kyiv-Mohyla Academy occupies a prominent place in the history of Ukrainian culture as its center and nursery. And yet Rutsky, with his educational plans, far surpassed Mohyla through his schools and seminary. Moreover, Rutsky accomplished everything by his own efforts, whereas Mohyla acted with the assistance of King Władysław IV and the then-influential Cossacks.

The convocation Sejm of 1632 was approaching, at which the decisive clash of forces was to occur. The non-united were in the majority; they had the king and the Polish clergy on their side. The situation for the Union promised little good. Ill and paralyzed, Rutsky implored help from Catholic Polish circles—but in vain. Golubev writes the following about this: “The Uniate Metropolitan Veliamyn Rutsky, alarmed by the resolutions of the nobility and the Cossacks at the Sejm, sent letters to influential Lithuanian-Polish magnates, in which he urgently begged them to defend the rights of the holy Union, against which the schismatics ‘boldly’ intended to launch an attack.” The same was done by the other united hierarchs, who gave instructions to deputies at the local assemblies to defend the Union.

At the Sejm, the non-united, relying on the Protestants—whose leader Radziwiłł was marshal of the Sejm—through their delegates Kropyvnytsky, Lavrentii Drevyński, and Metropolitan P. Mohyla, demanded, as a precondition for participation in the deliberations, recognition of their confession of faith and the confiscation of all church properties from the

united. In response, Rutsky delivered a speech. Basing his reply on the words of the psalm, *This is the day which the Lord hath made...*, Rutsky sought to prove “that the Union possesses fully lawful rights to its existence in the Commonwealth, that it arose here as a result of the sincere desire of the Ruthenians to return to the bosom of the Catholic Church.” As evidence, Rutsky cited Prince Ostrogski, who at first indeed sincerely considered the Union. Further, Rutsky demonstrated “that it is not the schismatics who suffer oppression from the Uniates, but on the contrary, the Uniates from the schismatics,” and he presented the register of victims—already enumerated elsewhere—of the Uniate martyrs, headed by St. Josaphat. “In conclusion he declared that the South-Rus’ people had from ancient times been in unity with the Roman Church, and that those rights and privileges to which the schismatics are accustomed to appeal were granted by Lithuanian-Rus’ rulers not to them, but to the Uniates, as sons obedient to their mother.”

The reply to Rutsky’s speech was delivered by Lavrentii Drevyński and Mohyla, who attempted to refute Rutsky’s arguments. But Rutsky, by the force of his arguments and his brilliant knowledge of the history of Ukraine, demonstrated in his second speech that Ukraine had been from the beginning in communion with the Apostolic See.

In turn, he subjected the *Synopsis*, a pamphlet that contained the demands of the Orthodox at the Sejm, to criticism. He demonstrated the historical illiteracy of the authors of the *Synopsis* in matters of Ukrainian history. According to the *Synopsis*, Ukraine was dependent upon the Patriarch of Constantinople already at the time of the Council of Nicaea. But then, Rutsky replies, there existed not only no “title” of Patriarch of Constantinople, but not even a “bishop of Constantinople.” Further, the

Synopsis writes that the baptism of Ukraine took place in the year 868, under Photius; this is false, says Rutsky, because St. Volodymyr the Great lived one hundred years after the death of Photius, and Ukraine was baptized by him in 988, under Patriarch Chrysoberges, who was obedient to Rome. In the year 868, some Ukrainians did receive baptism, but at that time Constantinople itself was in unity with Rome. The Ukrainians appealed to Pope Nicholas for permission concerning their rite. St. Olga was in communion with Rome († 946). When Constantinople broke unity with Rome, Ukraine did not follow its example. The Ukrainian bishops themselves consecrated Clement Smoliatych as metropolitan, by the imposition upon him of the head of Pope Clement of Rome.

As a further proof of Ukraine's unity with Rome, Rutsky adduces the institution of the feast of the Translation of the Relics of St. Nicholas from Myra of Lycia to Bari, under Metropolitan Ephrem; this is a Catholic feast and another proof. He also cites "a letter found in ancient manuscripts (1170) of Metropolitan John to the Pope, with a request for the union of the Churches."

Further, Rutsky demonstrates the rights of the united to the churches and properties, and the unity of Ukraine with Rome, by the following arguments:

1. The privileges of King Jogaila for the Uniates;
2. The decision of the Horodło Sejm (1413), by which all churches and rights belong only to Ukrainian Catholics;

3. The journey of Metropolitan Isidore to the Council of Florence in 1439;
4. The charter of Władysław Jagiełło, which equalized the Uniates in rights with the Latins, because the united were present at the Council of Florence;
5. The letter of the Kyiv Metropolitan Michael to Pope Sixtus IV (14 March 1476), in which he declares his submission and recognizes the Pope as the head of the Church;
6. The letter of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Niphont, to Metropolitan Joseph II of Kyiv, in which he mentions the Florentine Union and counsels living in concord with the Latins;
7. The charters of Sigismund I and Sigismund III granting privileges to the Uniates.

Yet, after a long and arduous struggle and disputation, the Sejm commission elected to reconcile the two sides issued the following decisions—injurious to the united—its “resolutions”:

1. Permission for the non-united to conduct divine services throughout the entire Ukrainian territory under Poland;
2. St. Sophia and the Vydubychi Monastery were to remain in the possession of Rutsky;

3. The Monastery of St. Michael was to pass into the ownership of the Orthodox;
4. In Mogilev the churches were to be returned to the Orthodox, and in Orsha two churches;
5. In Vilnius they were permitted to complete the stone Church of the Holy Spirit, but in such a way that it should not have the appearance of a fortress;
6. The Lviv bishopric and the Univ archimandrite were to remain non-united in perpetuity;
7. Likewise the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra;
8. The Zhydychyn archimandrite was to be returned to the Orthodox, and the existence of all brotherhoods in the Crown and the Lithuanian Principality was legalized.

Thus the convocation Sejm was concluded with resolutions harmful and damaging to the Union.

Nevertheless, the Orthodox violated the limits of the Sejm's resolutions. The first to do so was Mohyla himself, who already on 12 July 1633 forcibly seized the cathedral church of St. Sophia in Kyiv. Metropolitan Rutsky immediately lodged a protest with the court. In this "Protestation," Rutsky writes: "His Grace Father Mohyla, with a great armed band of people... seized St. Sophia and three other churches in Kyiv, violently forcing entry... having

no right or pretext whatsoever for this.” At the same time, Rutsky, together with all the bishops, submitted a protest against the resolution of the aforementioned Sejm commission.

The coronation of Sejm was approaching. The mobilized forces of the non-united demanded still greater rights. In order to bring the cause of the Union to the forefront at that Sejm, the united published the following two books:

1. *The Holy Union of the Eastern and Western Church, existing in the Rus' land from the time of its baptism and endowed with rights and privileges by the Lithuanian-Polish rulers; and*
2. *The Rights and Privileges granted by the Lithuanian-Polish rulers to the inhabitants of the Greek faith who are in union with the Roman Church.*

At this Sejm, “the interests of the Orthodox Church were defended by Voronych, Kisiel, Proskura-Sushchansky, and others” (Golubev). The commission chosen by way of compromise to reconcile the Uniates with the Orthodox dissolved. A second commission was convened by Władysław IV himself. The atmosphere was favorable to the non-united. Golubev himself writes that “... Władysław formed a firm intention to satisfy the demands of the Orthodox.”

The aforementioned commission drafted the following project of the “pacification of the Ruthenians”:

1. Freedom of faith, divine services, brotherhoods, schools, seminaries, and printing presses for both the Uniates and the non-united.
2. The united Metropolitan is to have authority over all Uniates in Ukraine; the Vydubychi Monastery is to belong to him. St. Sophia and the monastery in Hrodno are to belong to the non-united Metropolitan.
3. The non-Uniates are to elect four bishops: of Lviv, Lutsk, Przemyśl, and Mstislaw. The episcopal sees of Przemyśl and Lviv are to belong to the non-Uniates in perpetuity. The united Bishop of Przemyśl, Athanasius Krupecky, is to receive a lifetime pension, and for his residence the monasteries of Spas, St. Onuphrius, and the so-called Smilnytsia are assigned to him. The bishopric of Lutsk, together with its cathedral, is to be transferred to the non-united, and Bishop Pochapovsky, retaining the title of Bishop of Lutsk, is to reside in the Zhydychn Archimandrite. His successor will no longer bear the title of Bishop of Lutsk. A new non-united bishopric is to be created—the Marsislaw bishopric—with its seat in Mogilev, to be erected by the king.
4. The Pechersk Archimandrite, the Golden-Domed Monastery of St. Michael, and all other monasteries and churches in Kyiv are to pass into the ownership of the non-united Metropolitan, as well as three

churches in Vilnius that until now had belonged to the Uniates (the Resurrection, St. John, and St. George). A commission is to be appointed for the division of churches throughout all of Ukraine.

5. Free transition from one confession to the other.

6. Both sides are to live in peace and to refrain from legal proceedings.

Against this shameful project Rutsky and the entire episcopate protested in vain, both in the country and in Rome. The Apostolic See was no longer able to influence the liberal, decaying Polish noble world so that it might recognize justice for the Union.

Mohyla, as already mentioned, seized St. Sophia, and in addition also the churches of St. Nicholas, the so-called Tithe Church, St. Simeon, and St. Basil, which were solemnly reconsecrated. On the basis of these *Pacta conventa*, the united lost three bishoprics; only the following bishoprics remained with the Ukrainian Catholic Church: Volodymyr, Kholm, and Pinsk, while Polotsk was divided, since the non-united Marsislaw bishopric was created. The observance of these pacts was sworn in the name of King Władysław IV by Jan Casimir on 13 November 1632. And thus the struggle was transferred from the Sejm tribunes into the countryside. Everywhere violent attacks began against the united, against their churches and their property.

Metropolitan Rutsky, firm and unshakable, did not retreat a single step from the positions he had taken. When in Vilnius the non-united attempted to wrest three churches from the united, Rutsky, surrounded by the clergy, stood at the threshold of one of the sanctuaries and declared: "We are here to

defend our Churches; and sooner will you pass over our corpses than we will allow these holy places to be profaned.” And when the non-united, led by Radziwiłł, amid insults and slanders against the Uniates, did not withdraw from their demands, Rutsky stated: “We are ready to die in defense of those altars which the Holy Church has entrusted to us for safekeeping.” How zealously Rutsky defended the cause of the Ukrainian Catholic Church is attested by the words of the nuncio Visconti to Cardinal Barberini: “The prudence and zeal of Metropolitan J. V. Rutsky are already known to Your Eminence from elsewhere—but in this most important circumstance (the matter of the *pacta conventa* and the defense of the Union at the coronation Sejm) they are worthy of immortal remembrance.” He further compares Rutsky to Elijah, exalts his courage, virtue, and constancy, “which edified me.”

Such were also all the united bishops, who at this critical moment displayed admirable strength and fortitude of spirit and zeal, and steadfastly stood up for the rights of our Church.

Yet meanwhile, while Rutsky on the defensive front fought worthily and honorably—even heroically—for the Ukrainian Catholic Church, he did not neglect the offensive front. He did not abandon his plans to expand the Union and to bring into it the Orthodox brethren. In this regard the following two facts are important and noteworthy:

1. the attempt to bring the non-united into the Union and the Lviv Synod of 1629, and
2. the effort to recover the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra from the non-united.

Metropolitan Rutsky, in consultation with the Ukrainian Catholic episcopate, with non-united bishops, and with prominent lay leaders, planned to convene a joint synod in Lviv on 27 October 1629. From the royal letter on this matter to Rutsky, preserved in the work of Golubev, it is evident that the king desired this synod, which was to be preceded by synods in Kyiv and other cities. The protector of the Lviv synod was the zealous Catholic Prince Zaslavsky. The non-united bishops did not attend this synod, with the exception of Smotrytsky. Among the lay non-united who arrived were Prince Puzyna and Lavrentii Drevyński. Rutsky was greeted in Lviv by Fr. Boyarsky, the non-united parish priest of the Dormition church, by Drevyński, and by Puzyna. The synod began with a solemn Divine Service celebrated by Rutsky in the Jesuit church, and the sermon on the Primacy of the Pope was delivered by the king's delegate, the Jesuit Bembus. Thereafter synodal deliberations were held in the palace of Prince Zaslavsky. The disputed points concerning the Primacy of the Pope, the Holy Spirit, and Purgatory were discussed. The non-united did not take any active part in the disputations, and conditioned their consent to the Union upon the approval of the Patriarch of Constantinople. At the conclusion, in the Dormition church, Rutsky celebrated a solemn *moleben*. "And afterward, when the Metropolitan and all the Uniates were about to leave the church, turning toward the rising of the sun, they sang aloud: 'Grant consolation to Thy servants, O All-Immaculate.'"

After the *moleben*, a farewell banquet was held in the house of Fr. Boyarsky, at which Meletius Smotrytsky and Lavrentii Drevyński spoke on behalf of the non-united. The former said, among other things: "It would be good, Fathers, if you were us and we were you, and if we walked together along one path, already prepared by us." Drevyński, in response, said that the Orthodox adhere to the seven councils, "and not to present-day

innovations—but, Your Graces, one must know that the devil is not so very terrible as he is painted.” The united emerged from the synod as moral victors, but it did not prove possible to advance the cause of the Union; the same fate befell the synods that preceded the Lviv synod and the other joint synods.

2. The second effort of Rutsky to increase the possessions of the Ukrainian Catholic Church was his endeavor to restore the Pechersk Lavra to the Union. It is evident that such a valuable and glorious historical monument—after St. Anthony and St. Theodosius of the Caves, after Nestor and others, a center of culture and learning in Ukraine in the princely era—attracted Rutsky, so that it might be returned to its ancient and sole rightful owner, the Ukrainian Catholic Church. As historians relate, Rutsky pursued this matter in two ways:
3. He pressed for the appointment of a Catholic, Fr. Herman Tyszkiewicz, as archimandrite of the Lavra; and
4. He sought to invalidate the charter of Petro Mohyla appointing the Pechersk Archimandrite. This matter was overseen in Warsaw, on Rutsky’s behalf, by Jakiv Markart.

From his letter to Rutsky we learn that the counter-candidate for the Pechersk archimandrite was Fr. Herman Tyszkiewicz, the united administrator of the Leshchyn Monastery. Concerning this, the aforementioned Golubev writes: “The Latin-Uniate party, which from the very beginnings of the Union had sought to subject this foremost South-Rus’ monastery to its influence, was of course greatly pleased by this ... and showed Tyszkiewicz every kind of support. At least the active participation

in this matter of the Uniate Metropolitan V. Rutsky is entirely certain.” The Uniate sympathies of the monks were manifested most clearly in the fact that they indeed elected Tyszkiewicz as archimandrite. Golubev attempts to prove the illegitimacy of this election, claiming that “only some of the Kyiv-Pechersk monks decided to take his side,” who were allegedly “in the minority.” However, the matter was decided by King Władysław IV, who granted the Kyiv-Pechersk archimandrite and the Lavra to his friend P. Mohyla—and thus Rutsky’s noble plans did not succeed. Yet even so, they remain a valuable link in the chain of Rutsky’s labors: a proof of his love for Ukrainian antiquity, for the monuments of native history, and of his concern for increasing the possessions of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and for strengthening her eastern front with firm bastions.

History has preserved for us two further facts that relate to Rutsky’s efforts to extend the Union beyond the borders of Ukraine.

1. Metropolitan Lev Kyshka, in his work—the manuscript *Vitae clarorum virorum* (in Petrushevych, p. 840)—records that in 1613 Rutsky entered into friendly relations with magnates of Hungary (*Hungariae*), especially with Count Homonnai Drugeth and many others. Abbot M. Mavrovych served as the intermediary between Rutsky and these magnates. In connection with the matter of union, a synod was to be held there. Whether it actually took place is unknown. On the basis of a report by Simon Mateykovych from Alba Graeca to the Propaganda, the Congregation decided that two Ukrainian missionaries should be sent from Ukraine to Hungary. The Bishop of Przemyśl, Krupecky, was sent, but this mission did not succeed. This matter has not yet been fully investigated, yet it is valuable in that Metropolitan Rutsky also sought to spread the light of the faith

toward the South.

2. The second fact is the conversion of the non-united Patriarch Ignatius. The history of this holy man is as follows. He had been Archbishop of Cyprus. Driven out by the Turks, he resided for some time in Rome, and during the reign of Boris Godunov went to Russia and in 1613 became administrator of the Ryazan eparchy. In Tula he encountered Pseudo-Dimitri, and when the latter, with the aid of Polish forces, became tsar, he appointed Ignatius Patriarch of Moscow during the lifetime of Patriarch Job. He crowned Dimitri against the will of the other bishops and allowed his Catholic wife Marina Mniszech to have a Latin chapel in the Kremlin. When the tragic reversal occurred—the failure of the Polish venture in the boundless expanses of Russia—Patriarch Ignatius fled to Ukraine. He feared persecution by the Muscovite government, because he had urged the prince and the bishops toward union with the Roman Church (*principem et episcopos ad unionem cum Ecclesia Romana suadebat*). Therefore, being persecuted, he withdrew to Lithuania to his close co-religionist, Metropolitan Rutsky (*persecutus ad Metropol. Rutski, sibi proxime affinem Lithuaniam secessit*). Here, under the influence of Rutsky, he openly professed the Union and sent an appropriate letter to Rome. He lived in great friendship with Rutsky and St. Josaphat (*familiaritatis jura invincibilia sanciebat*). He died in the repute of a saint in 1617, and his incorrupt relics, together with those of Rutsky, were taken by the Muscovites in 1654 from the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius to Russia.

It is clear that the conversion of Patriarch Ignatius was the work of Rutsky, who desired to unite that holy man to the Holy Catholic Church.

We thus see that in the severe struggle with the non-united, Rutsky worthily and heroically defended the Ukrainian Church and strove to extend the Holy Catholic Faith beyond the borders of Ukraine. Amid hostile onslaughts, the threat of death to Rutsky himself, the unfriendly attitude of the Polish authorities and the Latins toward the Union, bloody attacks by the non-united—murders, violence, and the dreadful specter of fratricidal war—Rutsky stood calmly and steadfastly in defense of the Church entrusted to him by Providence. And he defended her—he preserved all that lay within his power—recovered many church properties and monasteries from the non-united, and united nearly 200,000 souls to the Union. Therefore he will remain in the history of the Ukrainian Catholic Church as her great Champion, who will shine as an example of sacrifice, heroism, and extraordinary labor for the cause of Christ for long centuries. On both fronts he achieved decisive successes and preserved that which, without his work, would have fallen into ruin.

In conclusion, one must still emphasize the heroism of his efforts—the heroism of a Leader who, surrounded by only a handful of faithful collaborators, in a sea of hatred and malice, amid the glare of bloodshed and rebellion, himself directed the front, always at the foremost post, always ready to die for the holy idea of Union which he so dearly loved.

In Defense of the Prestige of the Ukrainian Catholic Church

As is known from the preceding brief references, the general body of Polish society—the clergy, the nobility, and the government—was hostile toward the Union. This is seen clearly at the Sejms at which the fate of the Union

was decided (1621, 1622, 1623, 1632–1633). Only limited circles, during the reign of Sigismund III—and he himself—were favorably disposed toward the Union. However, the greatest evil was that the Latin episcopate openly demanded the abolition of the Union, slandered and defamed its leaders both in Polish governmental circles and in Rome, drew the Ukrainian nobility en masse into Latinism, while the Jesuits drew over the youth. Rutsky and the Ukrainian bishops were not granted seats in the Senate, despite repeated admonitions from the Pope. Everywhere the Ukrainian Catholic Church was humiliated in the persons of its leaders. Concerning this, Likowski writes: “It is difficult to believe what contempt and what disregard the Ruthenian episcopate experienced from the Latin bishops and, in general, from Polish society.”

There were many examples of this. It suffices to recall the more notable ones. The Latin suffragan of Vilnius refused to grant Rutsky first place during the consecration of the Polish bishop Kisiel. There was also the audacious claim against the Metropolitan that his authority extended over a larger territory than that of the Polish Primate in Gniezno. Another incident: at the funeral of King Sigismund III, the Kraków canons considered themselves higher in dignity than the Ukrainian bishops and did not allow them to walk before them. When to these cases we add the fact that later, in 1643, at the Synod in Warsaw under the leadership of Primate Mateusz Łubieński, the Polish episcopate, with full synodal authority, forbade the Ukrainian united bishops to use equal titles, crosses, and violet vestments, we obtain a true picture of the complete humiliation of the Ukrainian Church by the Polish episcopate.

This hostile attitude of the Polish clergy toward the Union was a great obstacle to the spread of the Union. Rutsky wrote about this in his memorial

to the Propaganda in 1622. In this complaint he demonstrates by facts that the Latin episcopate desires the abolition of the Union as something harmful to Poland. The nobility and the government desire the same. The Polish nobility more readily builds churches for the non-united than for the united. Churches of the united are leased to Jews, from which the Jews derive great profits. Thus Catholics act in this manner toward Catholics.

In response to this letter of Rutsky, Pope Urban VIII wrote an admonition to the Archbishop of Gniezno (14 October 1628), in which he expressed his sorrow over the fate of the Ukrainian people: “We grieve over the very bitter lot of this people, because they are wronged from all sides. We have heard their groans and recognized the voice of the Ukrainian flock, which complains that it lives in great injustice.” (In a similar manner the Pope also admonished Sigismund III.) Thus, as always, the Common Father defended us against the encroachments of enemies.

A further manifestation of the humiliation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church was the drawing of the faithful into Latinism. Concerning this painful wound of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Rutsky wrote in his memorial to Rome (point III). The Latin clergy, under the pretext of the “invalidity of the Holy Mysteries administered by united priests” or of the “lack of education among the united clergy,” drew the united over to Latinism on a large scale. The Jesuits drew over mainly the youth. They did this by disparaging our rite, by forbidding the practice of religious observances in our rite, and even by forcibly compelling our youth to change rite.

Rutsky recalls in his memorial that Rome never forced Catholics of other rites to change their rite. Pope Leo IX wrote about this to Cerularius; Pope Paul V in 1615 confirmed the Greek rite; Pope Gregory XIII founded the

Greek College, whose students were required to swear to remain in the Greek rite until death. Therefore Rutsky asks the Pope to withdraw from Latin secular clergy the right to administer the Holy Mysteries to the united, except in cases of necessity, and he requests that the Apostolic See clarify that receiving the Holy Mysteries from a Latin priest is in no way a means of proselytism or of changing rite.

And in another report to Rome from the year 1624, Rutsky wrote that the Polish bishops were of the opinion that it was better to destroy the Union of the Ukrainians than to support it: "*Melius destruere unionem Ruthenorum, quam provehere illam.*" We now understand the words of Rutsky from that same report: "Our heart is often torn apart by the humiliation and contempt of the Latins toward us... they consider us refuse." Yet Rutsky did not fall into despair, but defended with dignity the honor and esteem of the Ukrainian Church. He defended it as best he could—he himself and the Ukrainian Catholic episcopate together.

To add to these evils, the Basilians began to pass over to Latinism. In the year 1624 only one hundred Basilians remained faithful to the Ukrainian Church, while the rest betrayed her. The unfortunate Rutsky was compelled to petition Rome to send Carmelites who would adopt the Greek rite and conduct the novitiate of the Order. This was undoubtedly a consequence of the degradation of our rite by the Poles.

Therefore Rutsky earnestly implored the Apostolic See to forbid proselytism to Latinism and the change of rite. Rutsky writes: "If we live in union with the Roman Church, then let our rite be protected by the same rights and privileges as the Latin rite." He likewise requested that the Polish Jesuits, through their supreme authority, be forbidden to draw people into Latinism. Because of this evil, there burst forth from the Atlas of the Union

blood-stained words of pain: “They excessively embitter my life. Strive to come to our aid—to us who are dying of sorrow, having no one who might help us” (Letter of 28 July 1627 to Fr. Pidberezky, OSBM, in Rome). This is the cry of a wounded giant’s soul, suffering beyond measure, yet gazing upon the vision of Christ suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane—ready to follow Him even to Golgotha.

Moreover, in its beginnings the Union of Brest still had to win confidence in its permanence. After all, had not the union of Michael Vsevolodovich fallen, as well as the unions of Lyons, of Daniel, and of Florence? Did the Brest Union have better prospects? Yet this knot of doubts concerning the success of the Union was cut by the tragic news of the death of St. Hieromartyr Josaphat. His blood, shed for the Union, proved to all that the Union would live and continue to live, because it desired to live. The Union would not fall, for it had confessors like lions, heroes who died for the Faith.

And Pope Urban VIII, confident in the bright future of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and grieving over her present condition, fulfilled all of Rutsky’s demands in matters of rite. Indeed, he granted more than Rutsky had asked. On 7 February 1624 he forbade Greek Catholics, both lay and clerical, to pass over to Latinism, reserving permission for such a change exclusively to the Apostolic See. All transfers made without such permission he declared invalid. This prohibition was further strengthened by the same Pope in a second letter dated 7 August 1624. However, due to the opposition of the king and the Polish episcopate, these papal prohibitions have not been promulgated in Poland even to this day. Likewise, the Propaganda issued a decision concerning the humiliation of our bishops: on 16 February 1630 it ruled that the principle of *praecedentia*—precedence or seniority—between

Polish and Ukrainian bishops should be determined solely by the date of their episcopal consecration: *antiquitas eorum promotionis ad episcopatum*.

Thus we see that the Apostolic See did all that it could to defend the Ukrainian Catholic Church and acknowledged the justice of all the demands of the Atlas of the Union.

And it is not the fault of Rutsky, nor of the Apostolic See, that from these decrees our Church derived little benefit. Yet the efforts of Rutsky on the front of the struggle for the dignity and prestige of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, and the victories he achieved, fully demonstrate that Rutsky desired to see the Ukrainian Catholic Church as she ought to be—namely, standing upon a worthy and lofty pedestal, surrounded by respect and love, and not by humiliation. He defended her boldly and without ceasing, even though pain crushed his chest and sorrow weighed upon him like a stone... although he himself suffered most of all for her sake.

And therefore, in our own times, when once again enemies from every side strive to humiliate and trample us, when attacks are directed against the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy, when the faithful are drawn away and Ukrainian priests are even beaten, Rutsky stands before us as an immortal example of perseverance and steadfastness in the struggle for the glorious prestige and dignity of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. And he—the Great Ukrainian—has been and will always be for us a Protector and Guardian in our sorrow in heaven, especially when enemies assail us from all sides and seek to humiliate us and to mock and despise our rite and our Church.

The Question of the Patriarchate

In order to enhance the splendor and greatness of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and to set her in opposition to the Moscow non-united Church, which possessed its own patriarch in Moscow, Rutsky began efforts toward the establishment of a Ukrainian patriarchate—that is, toward raising the Ukrainian Catholic Kyivan-Galician Metropolia to this dignity.

At the same time, Rutsky earnestly desired to unite the non-united with the Union. Therefore, despite repeated failures, he initiated discussions concerning reconciliation with Boretsky, Mohyla, Drevyński, Kisiel, and other prominent non-united leaders. Filled with brotherly love and tolerance toward the non-united in the name of Christ's call, "that all may be one," and conscious of the consequences of division and struggle which contemporaries described as "Rus' destroying Rus'," Rutsky conducted a series of joint conferences at which there matured a plan of reconciliation—a plan for resolving the Ukrainian ecclesiastical question: the united Ukrainian Churches were to form a Kyivan Ukrainian patriarchate.

Parallel to these joint initiatives, separate efforts were undertaken by the united episcopate both in the country and in Rome. Concerning this, Professor Lototsky writes: "One of such Uniate synods, the synod of 20 January 1624 in Lithuanian Novogrudok, sent envoys to Kyiv with an instruction that set forth the conditions under which negotiations for reconciliation were to be conducted; among the foundations of such negotiations, particular attention is drawn to the project of founding a Ukrainian patriarchate, 'so that a patriarch might be newly established in our lands, as also in the Muscovite lands, upon certain ecclesiastical endowments,

who would reside upon those endowments for all future times and would never send elsewhere for blessing.’ The synodal instruction further stipulated that non-united bishops should engage in relations without explicit plenipotentiary authority from their brotherhoods”—clearly meaning with the united—and that as few laymen as possible should be invited to their deliberations.

From this valuable source, what is especially important for us is that the initiator of this epoch-making plan was Rutsky himself, and that these efforts began in the year 1624. This is further clarified by a laconic note in Petrushevych, under the year 1624: *Instruction of the Kyivan Uniate Metropolitan Joseph Rutsky and the Lithuanian-Ruthenian bishops to envoys sent to Kyiv and to the Greek-Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities for negotiations concerning the proposed Church Union and the establishment in the Ruthenian-Lithuanian lands of a special patriarchate, modeled on the Muscovite one*, written in Novogradok on 20 January 1624.

This instruction was signed, besides Rutsky, by Joachim Morokhovsky, Bishop of Volodymyr and Brest; Athanasius Pakosta, Bishop of Chełm and Belz; Jeremiah, Bishop of Lutsk and Ostroh; Anthony Seliava, Bishop of Polotsk, Vitebsk, and Mstislav; and Gregory Mykhailovsky, Bishop of Turov and Pinsk; for the absent Bishop of Przemyśl, Sambir, and Sanok, the signature was affixed by another.

From this it is already clear that Rutsky brought the question of the patriarchate of the Ukrainian Catholic Church before a broad forum, in consultation with and on the advice of the Ukrainian united episcopate. Here Professor Chubaty notes a noble trait of Rutsky’s character. For him it was sufficient to know that he had brought divided brothers closer together and prepared the realization of God’s plans; he himself withdrew into the

background, proposing Petro Mohyla as Kyivan Catholic patriarch, while reserving for himself the labor of an ordinary hierarch. Yet the Cossack tumult at the Kyiv synod (1628) shattered this plan of reconciliation—and thus the matter of the patriarchate subsided. It emerged again only toward the end of Rutsky's life, under King Władysław IV.

Concerning this, Dr. Iz. Szaraniewicz writes in his book *Patriarchat wschodni wobec Kościoła Ruskiego i Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*. He attributes to this matter rather political tendencies and assigns the initiative to Władysław IV.

“For the pacification of Poland, agitated by disputes between the united and the non-united,” King Władysław IV sent from Vilnius on 3 September 1636 an appeal to notable persons of both the Uniate and non-Uniate confessions, that they might come to an understanding regarding the creation of a separate patriarchate in Poland. “The most important matter among you,” writes Władysław IV in his appeal, “concerns the obedience which you render to the Eastern patriarch. You see what has happened to that see and what is happening. This can be had among yourselves, instead of being obtained from elsewhere; therefore, a patriarch after the model of Moscow.”

Thus the king called for concord and agreement in this matter prior to the Sejm, which was to assemble and possibly decide the question. It is unknown whether the king acted in consultation with Rutsky and merely legalized and approved with his authority the designs of the Atlas of Ukraine.

Another historian, the Muscovite Turgenev, in his work *Supplementum ad historica Russiae monumenta*, provides somewhat more concrete information on this matter. The plan for the union of Orthodox Ukraine with Rome—most likely through the creation of a Ukrainian patriarchate

and the granting of this dignity to Mohyla—was sought to be carried out by the Bishop of Lutsk Athanasius Puzyna, the Kyiv voivode Adam Kisiel, and the Ukrainian non-united Metropolitan Petro Mohyla himself. Letters of Pope Urban VIII on this matter, addressed to the aforementioned persons, together with the dispatch from Rome of Ivan Damascene, a monk of the Dominican Order, in order to become more closely acquainted with the matter, were written in July 1636 and in February 1642. They are contained in Theiner's *Monumenta Lithuaniae et Poloniae*.

Much clarification of this matter is also provided by reports of the monk of the Hustyn Monastery, Pafnutii. He stated the following in response to an inquiry by the Muscovite voivode Nikifor Pleshcheev: “Letters were written to Bishop Paisius from Polissia by the Bishop of Lutsk and by the Prince of Koshyr; and that Bishop Paisius wrote to the abbots and brethren of the Lubny Transfiguration and Hustyn monasteries that at the Sejm the Polish councillors, the Polish king, and the Latin archbishops had conspired so that there should be no Orthodox faith in Lithuania and Poland, and that the Kyiv Metropolitan Petro Mohyla should abandon the Orthodox faith. The Roman Pope has blessed this Metropolitan Petro Mohyla—now, during the Great Fast—as patriarch; thus Petro Mohyla is to be patriarch of the Christian faith. He (Mohyla) sent to the king, to all the councillors, and to the Latin archbishops a declaration that he wishes, by his teaching, to establish church rites according to the command and will of the Pope.”

There is indeed no mention here of Rutsky, but the position of Mohyla with regard to the projects of a Ukrainian patriarchate and his full agreement with the proposals of the Pope are very significant. This is, however, entirely clear, since Mohyla was Catholic in spirit, and at his death he received the Holy Viaticum from the hands of a Catholic priest.

Undoubtedly, a major obstacle to the realization of this project were the Orthodox brotherhoods, directly dependent upon the patriarchs, from whose authority the non-united bishops wished to free themselves.

Already Meletius Smotrytsky, during his stay in Constantinople, demanded of Cyril Lucaris the subjection of the brotherhoods to the jurisdiction of the bishops.

Metropolitan Mohyla, as the highest hierarch of the non-united Church and exarch of all Ukraine, acted autocratically. He subjected the Lviv stauropegion to his authority and forbade it to print books without his approval. A second proof that Mohyla acted independently is the fact that he did not congratulate the newly elected Patriarch Parthenius. On this account the latter wrote to Mohyla: “You are breaking away from our authority,” because “all have congratulated us on our accession to the throne, but Your Illustriousness does not wish ever to write to us or to show your sentiments toward us.” This episode, so characteristic of Mohyla, only assures us that on his part—being unfavorably disposed toward the patriarchs of Constantinople and toward the brotherhoods—there were no obstacles to the establishment of a Ukrainian patriarchate. This dignity was proposed to him both by Rutsky and by Rome.

Another historian of the Ukrainian Church, M. Harasevych, likewise mentions the patriarchate. In his *Annals* he writes: On 1 August 1636 King Władysław IV issued an appeal to the Ukrainian people, and especially to the brotherhoods of Lviv and Vilnius, that in deliberations with the united they should establish—elect—a patriarch, as had been done in Moscow, who would exercise patriarchal rights without appeal. These royal edicts were proclaimed by Petro Mohyla on 26 September 1636 to the Ukrainian faithful, and especially to the Lviv stauropegial brotherhood, for

consideration and for the election of delegates zealous for the Church and religion to the forthcoming Sejm.

Here we already see concrete directives in this matter, issued by Mohyla. Yet foreign hostile forces, which incited the brotherhoods and the non-united faithful against reconciliation, did not allow the realization of Rutsky's luminous plan. He desired the unity and love of Ukrainians, and as an expression of this—the plan of the patriarchate. Concerning this Professor Chubaty aptly says: “The Kyivan patriarchate, which would have made the Ukrainian land the center of Eastern Catholicism for all of Eastern Europe, was to be, on the one hand, the immediate head of the Ukrainian-Belarusian Church, and on the other hand, a mediator between the universal shepherd, the Roman Pope, and the hierarchy subject to him.”

Therefore, in the matter of the patriarchate, the greatest merit undoubtedly belongs to Rutsky, who first advanced it and strove for its realization. “This matter, however, Metropolitan Rutsky did not succeed in bringing to a happy conclusion, for death prevented him from doing so. Yet this metropolitan of great heart and love, conscious of the attraction which patriarchal dignity holds for the East, at his death entrusted these efforts to his successor Rafail Korsakov, who likewise, as did the later successors Athanasius Seliava and Havryil Koliada, was no longer able to resolve this matter because of the death of Petro Mohyla,” for there were no longer among the non-united supporters of the Union.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is still necessary to recall Rutsky's efforts in the matter of the beatification of St. Josaphat. As has already been mentioned in Rutsky's biography, his inner spiritual disposition was profoundly shaped by St.

Josaphat. Therefore, in gratitude to this holy man, Rutsky submitted a petition to Rome for his beatification shortly after his death. At the same time, Rutsky composed a biography of the Saint, entitled *The Life and Death of the Archbishop of Polotsk, Slain by Schismatics in the Year 1623* (*Vita et Mors Archiepiscopi Polocensis, a Schismaticis occisi – anno 1623*).

Rome grieved over this sacrifice of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. “We have read of the most holy life and the most bitter death of the blessed memory of Josaphat not without tears, joy, and sorrow” (*Vitam sanctissimam mortemque acerbissimam beatae memoriae Josaphat, non sine lacrymis et laetitiae et doloris perlegimus*)—with these words the Propaganda expressed its sympathy to Rutsky and the Ukrainian bishops. At the same time, the Propaganda informed Rutsky that the nuncio would begin preparations for the beatification process. This letter is dated Rome, 4 May 1624.

At the same time, the entire Ukrainian episcopate sent a joint letter to Rome, with the moving words of devotion and fidelity to the Apostolic See mentioned earlier. These are strong and courageous words of faith and love toward the Common Father, undoubtedly the fruit of the blood of St. Josaphat the Hieromartyr. St. Josaphat deeply impressed the seal of his spirit upon Rutsky.

Concerning the relationship between St. Josaphat and Rutsky, the Rector of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, Professor Hoffmann, writes the following: “Through the letters of Metropolitan Rutsky there resounds a tender tone of friendly attachment to the one with whom he lived together for five years in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius: ‘In all my sorrows, which I have in abundance by God’s grace, he alone was my sole consolation and relief; therefore now, like a bereaved turtledove without a companion, I shall groan in this unhappy journey of mine, awaiting the hour

in which he will draw me after himself, and that I may be worthy to be drawn by that cord by which he was drawn.” Thus writes the Ukrainian Metropolitan two months after the glorious death of his Friend. And he labored tirelessly for the beatification of his Brother in office.

In his letter to Rome concerning the beatification, Rutsky rightly recalls that in St. Josaphat the words of Tertullian would be fulfilled—that the blood of St. Josaphat would become seed for the Ukrainian Catholic Church. With the proclamation of St. Josaphat as Blessed, and later as Saint, Rutsky united his hopes for the strengthening of apostolic zeal in the clergy, even unto death for the Union, and he longed for that day, just as he longed for a death such as St. Josaphat had been granted. His words in the aforementioned letter express this beautifully.

As a sixty-year-old elder, Rutsky wrote to Rome that he wished “to hear of the end of this matter” (*utinam audiamus finem huius negotii*)—(letter to Pope Urban VIII, 1 August 1633). Providence did not allow him to live to see this long-awaited moment. Korsak, sent by Rutsky and his successor to the metropolitan see, continued to pursue this matter in Rome.

Finally, mention must be made of the conversion of Smotrytsky and his profession of faith, made into the hands of Rutsky. The words of the Atlas from his letter to Rome were fulfilled—that the blood of the Martyr would become a fruitful seed for Christians. The conversion of this moral instigator of the Vitebsk tragedy is undoubtedly a fruit of the blood of the Hieromartyr. The long path of wandering of this highly gifted but tragic man came to an end. He resolved to accept the Union openly, although in his heart he had already been united since the death of St. Josaphat.

The Bishop of Chełm, Jakiv Susha, writes that the intermediary in this matter between Smotrytsky and Rutsky was Prince Zaslavsky. Rutsky, informed by Prince Zaslavsky of Smotrytsky's intention, immediately departed from Lublin to Dubno in order to rescue the lost sheep. There in Dubno, Smotrytsky, with fervent devotion, made a profession of the Catholic faith into the hands of Rutsky—the so-called Gregorian profession prescribed for the Greek rite. Then, deeply moved to tears, Smotrytsky confessed. This took place on 6 July 1627. Rome was immediately informed, as well as the Congregation of the Holy Office and the “Protector of Ukraine,” Cardinal Bandini.

Rutsky himself wrote a moving letter to Pope Urban VIII. He rejoiced that the honor had fallen to him of receiving Meletius Smotrytsky into ecclesial unity. “I attribute his return to God Most Glorious Himself and to the blood of the martyr Josaphat. For what Paul did to Stephen, that Smotrytsky did to Kuntsevych. And just as we attribute the conversion of Paul to the prayer of Stephen, so we attribute the conversion of Smotrytsky to Kuntsevych.” This grace of God—the conversion of Smotrytsky and his profession of the Catholic faith into the hands of Rutsky—the Atlas received as a reward for his zeal. Smotrytsky received letters of congratulation from Rome and died as a fervent Catholic, as hegumen of the Derman Monastery.

And toward the white-haired elder, the tireless Atlas of the Union, death was already approaching. Eternity beckoned him—rest after heavy labors, happiness in heaven after the chalice of bitter sufferings. Yet he worked until the final hour of his life. He visited the metropolis and in 1637 traveled to Volhynia, to the monastery in Derman. He foresaw that he would die there and said to the monks around him: “I shall die like an ox in the yoke.” On 27 January 1637, in Derman, he wrote his moving and ardent testament, in

which he exhorted the bishops and clergy to the spread of the Union, to concord and to mutual love. This final will of the Atlas cannot be read without tears, without deep emotion. From every word of the testament there shines forth a burning love for the Holy Church and a desire to secure for her in Ukraine an eternal, enduring, and radiant future. And this love, this ardor of holy faith, he wished to pour into his collaborators and successors.

He died in the repute of holiness on 6 February 1637 in Derman. His mortal remains, which rested in Vilnius in the Church of the Holy Trinity—heroically defended by him against the encroachments of the schismatics—were taken by the Muscovites to Russia in 1654. Perhaps because Rutsky was already venerated at that time as a blessed one, numerous pilgrimages took place to his tomb, and he, as in life, continued his holy and great work. And although today the Ukrainian Church no longer possesses his mortal relics, which rest somewhere unknown in a distant foreign land, perhaps even destroyed by the sacrilegious hand of communist vandals, she nevertheless possesses his Spirit, which remained in his Order—the immortal Order of the Giant.

And when today, we, the faithful members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, on the three-hundredth anniversary of his death, honor Rutsky and honor his Order—radiant and immortal—when before our eyes he rises again as a Leader, as a Moses, who built for us what is dearest of all—a Holy Catholic Church, strong and enduring—then we can render no better homage to the bright memory of this Giant than to swear and promise within our souls that we shall fulfill his testament. And may this our oath-promise rise even to the East, to Moscow, where perhaps he

rests—forgotten and unknown—may it come to rest at the feet of his grave and greet it.

And the second thing that we must take from Rutsky in his jubilee is the synthesis of the works and designs of the Atlas of the Union. This synthesis must be set before the Ukrainian people in its full breadth and grandeur. It is this: Rutsky, the Atlas of the Union, is for the Ukrainian Church and people a living, immortal program for centuries—a program which its author, the Great Holy Man, the Great European, implanted in the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the People, fully conscious of our historical mission and the reason for our existence. The synthesis of Rutsky's endeavors in all spheres, and especially in the cultural-educational sphere, is the union of the highest, genius-like flight of Western Catholic philosophical thought—St. Thomas Aquinas—with an equally lofty flight of the Eastern mind—St. John of Damascus, the great Teacher of the Eastern Church. Further, it is the synthesis of all that is best in us with all that is most precious and healthiest in the West. This is the Ukrainian Catholic Church: Eastern, Ukrainian in form and rite, yet Western in content and dogma. This, finally, is also the synthesis of all our spiritual aspirations in this enchanting prism.

And the shadow of this Giant—his program and his synthesis—which in the present moment appears as the only thing truly needed, has sunk deeply into the Ukrainian people. Yet these treasures must be unearthed and once more displayed in their full glory and brilliance.

For this reason, the memory of Rutsky is especially dear to us precisely because of this synthesis. For we honor him for his labors for our Church in the spirit of this synthesis. We bow before the bright memory of Metropolitan Rutsky as the founder of schools and seminaries in Ukraine and as the author of the educational program in those schools, conceived

according to this same synthesis. We bow our heads before him, who was the first member of the Marian Sodality of our rite and who, in 1615, obtained for the Basilian Fathers permission to establish such sodalities in their schools.

Metropolitan Joseph Veliamyn Rutsky is a pillar of fire on the path of the Ukrainian Catholic Church; he is a saving signpost for her future, her great Guardian and Intercessor in Heaven.

The Atlas of the Union is a living example of a great Patriot— a Ukrainian—who laid for his beloved Fatherland firm, sound, and strong foundations for her existence and activity in the future—namely, the Holy Catholic Faith and a mighty Church, destined to preserve and to lead the Nation toward the goal traced out for Ukraine by the Most High, by the Apostolic Roman See, and by History.

He was a brilliant model of a Leader sent to the Nation by the Most High, who sacrificed himself entirely in service to the People through service to the Church, and who fought both for the Church and for the Nation throughout his whole life.

Therefore, the best homage we can render to him is this: that we continue his Order, embrace his synthesis, and carry it out in our lives, conscious of its greatness and its saving permanence. For this synthesis the Holy Father Pope Urban VIII called him:

“Os Christi et Petri, Athlas Unionis, Columna Ecclesiae, Athanasius Russiae.”

TESTAMENT of Metropolitan J. V. Rutsky

“I, Josyf Velyamin Rutsky, unworthy Metropolitan of Kyiv, Halych, and all Rus’-Ukraine, stand summoned before the judgment of God, to give an account of all the words, thoughts, and deeds of sixty-three years of life, and to hear the sentence that awaits me. I tremble entirely, for one must tremble when one is to be judged before the face of God. Yet I place my hope in His infinite mercy, which, though I am a sinner, will not reject me. In my defense I offer Him His most holy Passion, whose worth is infinite. I place my hope in the help of the most holy Virgin Mary, the Mother of my Judge, whom I, though an unworthy servant, have always venerated throughout my life. I also invoke the help of God’s Saints, and above all of my Guardian Angel and of the Saints whom I chose as my Protectors and invoked daily. I beg them with heart and lips to help me in my final struggle.

I declare before the whole world that I believe everything which the holy Catholic Church commands to be believed, without which faith no one can be saved—especially without union with the holy Roman Church, for which I am and always have been ready to die at any moment, should the occasion arise. I was always obedient to the Roman Pontiff and to him who represented him in this realm, and I die in this obedience. I humbly ask and beg all whom I have offended, whether by word or by example, that for the love of God they forgive me. For the future, let them not imitate my life and conduct, but the life and conduct of good servants of God who will live after me.

From the depth of my heart I forgive all who have offended me, even those who persecuted me under the pretext of justice, both me and my priests and brethren. I humbly beg my Lord and God that these sins not fall upon their heads, but that He grant them the grace to convert and to live.

I ask my brother and collaborator, the coadjutor, the Most Reverend Bishop of Pinsk, that at the first opportunity he go to the king and present to him this forgiveness, which his subject sends him. Let him offer him my prayers, which I shall lay before the Throne of the King of Kings, if I am found worthy to behold the face of God...

The Bishop of Pinsk shall entrust the Union to the protection of the king. In particular, let him ask that he bestow Ruthenian ecclesiastical benefices upon those whom my successor recommends to him. For who can know better which men are capable or incapable of governing the Ruthenian Church than the Metropolitan—especially since, according to the very ancient custom of the Eastern Church, from its cradle until our days, no bishops were chosen except monks. All those who seek this dignity through the patronage of secular lords are to be excluded as unworthy. If unworthy persons should by chance attain this dignity, the guilt will fall upon the conscience of the Metropolitan, and the conscience of the king will not be burdened.

I ask only one thing of my most high and most reverend lords and fathers, the fellow bishops of Rus'-Ukraine: namely, that for the love of Christ they remain in harmony with one another and with the Metropolitan. Let them show by words and deeds that they acknowledge him as their father; and if he has offended them, let them declare this to him, first carefully examining in brotherly love whether the offense is real. If the Metropolitan does not come to his senses, there exists an authority which, at the request of the bishops, can admonish him."

We admonish the monastic clergy to love and respect the members of the secular clergy as coworkers and brothers. Monks whom the Metropolitan may appoint to visit and judge secular priests should act in a spirit of love and friendship and beware of contempt and humiliation of their brothers.

But I also fervently admonish the members of the secular clergy and most strongly command them to be vigilant over that which pertains to the duties of their office over themselves and over their flock, and to save themselves and the souls entrusted to them. Let them teach their sheep what the faith commands under pain of loss of salvation, and let them not complain if at times bishops entrust judicial authority over them to monks.

Those who hold power in their hands, both the nobility and the townspeople, I ask to follow their pastors in spiritual matters, for such order God Himself has established. Let them not interfere in the governance of spiritual affairs, let them not pry into the lives and customs of the clergy, but leave this to their spiritual superiors, who, if the glory of God so requires, may admonish them; finally, once again I ask that the nobility and officials not supervise priests, and not interpret their intentions according to their own whims; for judgment over them God has reserved to Himself.

I entrust to my most reverend successor and ask him in the Lord that he strive for the increase of temporal and spiritual goods in my archdiocese and in my entire metropolitan province, for he will give an account of this before the Lord God.

In a separate letter, written in Ruthenian and signed by my own hand, I leave my last will concerning my ancient ancestral property and my house. Finally, I greet all—friends and enemies—who will survive me. Each of you will come after me in your turn. I greet you!



Іосиф Веламин Рутський
Митрополит

Київський, Таврійський і усяєї Русь-України

*1573 — †1637